



January 11, 2008

Mr. Daniel Darrach  
Coordinator, U.S. – Mexico Border Affairs  
Department of State  
WHA/MEX, Room 4258  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Darrach:

On behalf of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce and the South County Economic Development Council, we would like to express our full support for the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) efforts to obtain a Presidential Permit from the U.S. Department of State for the proposed Otay Mesa East International Port of Entry (POE) between San Diego, California and Tijuana, Baja California Mexico.

The San Diego and Tijuana region has the largest urban border area along the entire U.S. - Mexico border, with a combined population of over four million people. This combined population is anticipated to grow to over 5.5 million by the year 2020. The communities of San Diego and Tijuana are connected through the existing POEs at San Ysidro and Otay Mesa, which play a major role in the exchange of goods, services and people between the U.S. and Mexico.

Truck traffic through the Tijuana-San Diego region is limited to a single commercial border crossing at Otay Mesa with no alternative route within a reasonable distance of the manufacturing and distribution plants on both sides of the border. Delays for truck traffic during peak period's range from two to four hours or more. Truck traffic at Otay Mesa is projected to double by 2025. The new POE will help reduce delays for auto traffic at the existing Puerta Mexico-San Ysidro and Mesa de Otay-Otay Mesa Ports of Entry. In 2007, delays at the border are expected to contribute to a loss in output that exceeds \$2.9 billion and a loss in employment of more than 40,000 jobs for the San Diego region and Baja California combined (SANDAG, Economic Impacts of Wait Times in the San Diego – Baja California Border Region, December 2006).

The new POE is vital to the economic viability of the binational region. Therefore, we support Caltrans' efforts to obtain a Presidential Permit for the Otay Mesa East POE.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ruben Barrales in black ink.

Ruben Barrales  
President & CEO  
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce

Handwritten signature of Cindy Gompper-Graves in black ink.

Cindy Gompper-Graves  
Chief Executive Officer  
South County Economic Development Council