

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 6, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H-218 U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

As the need for an additional economic stimulus package becomes more apparent, we write today to emphasize the requirement to improve the infrastructure of our nation's inland international ports of entry. We respectfully request that the next economic stimulus package include money to finish new construction, modernize, rehabilitate, and expand the land ports of entry on our nation's southern and northern borders.

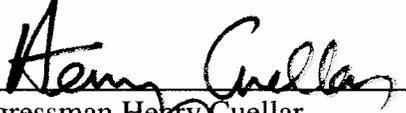
Though we are in uncertain economic times, the second quarter growth of our economy can be widely attributed to the strength of our nation's exports. Because Canada and Mexico are our first and second largest trade partners and 88 percent of that trade moves by land, the condition of our land ports of entry is critical to ensuring efficient trade. Manufacturers have developed highly integrated production systems across our borders, and efficient borders are critical to supporting the production of billions of dollars in goods and services every year. Freight coming across the border includes critical components needed for completing the manufacturing process of goods in the United States. Some of these products require that partially assembled parts go back and forth across the border, sometimes three or four times. Therefore, delays at our ports of entry can result in increased transportation costs and interruptions in manufacturing and delivery cycles. With the current downturn in our economy, our nation's businesses cannot afford delays at our borders. International trade and commerce are vital elements to bolstering our economy, and for this reason we must address infrastructural problems at our land ports of entry.

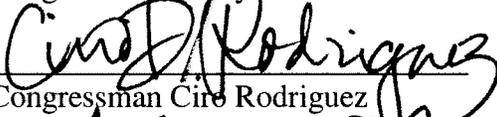
While we have made some advances in the way in which we process the 11.3 million cargo trucks and trains that pass through the northern and southern ports of entry each year, according to the General Services Administration (GSA), the nation's land ports of entry are faced with approximately \$5 billion in deficiencies. At the current construction allowance, it would take close to 40 years to address these deficiencies.

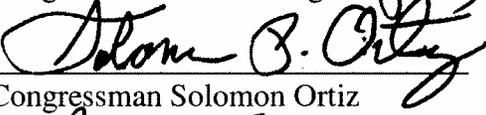
Moreover, GSA has indicated construction on a number of land port of entry modernization projects can begin within 90 to 120 days if funding becomes available.

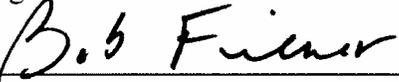
Inland port of entry construction, rehabilitation and modernization can play a significant role in lifting and sustaining our nation's economy and creating jobs. We respectfully request that any economic stimulus provide the \$5 billion necessary to adequately capitalize GSA's land port of entry modernization initiative.

Sincerely,

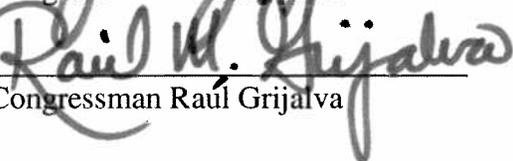

Congressman Henry Cuellar


Congressman Ciro Rodriguez


Congressman Solomon Ortiz


Congressman Bob Filner

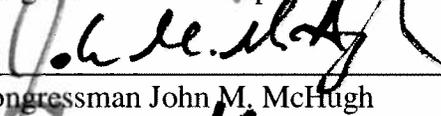

Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords


Congressman Raul Grijalva


Congressman Silvestre Reyes


Congressman Ruben Hinojosa


Congressman Bart Stupak


Congressman John M. McHugh


Congressman Steve Kagen

Cc: Congressman Steny Hoyer
Congressman James Clyburn
Congressman James Oberstar
Congressman John Mica