

MARTHA MCSALLY
2ND DISTRICT, ARIZONA

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,
RESPONSE, AND COMMUNICATIONS

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

1029 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2542

4400 E BROADWAY BOULEVARD
SUITE 510
TUCSON, AZ 85711
(520) 881-3588

77 CALLE PORTAL
SUITE B160
SIERRA VISTA, AZ 85635
(520) 459-3115

MCSSALLY.HOUSE.GOV

June 30, 2015

The Honorable R. Gil Kerlikowske
Commissioner
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20229

Dear Commissioner Kerlikowske:

The City of Douglas, Arizona, in my district, has been attempting to secure the approval of a new Commercial Port of Entry with your Department since 2012. In coordination with the Municipality of Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico, the City of Douglas requires an expansion of their commercial port as a way of harnessing economic opportunities, bolstering trade, and furthering Customs and Border Protections (CBP) mission and ability to provide security.

Volume at the port of entry has experienced rapid growth in recent years. In 2014, the Douglas port of entry processed more than 64,000 commercial trucks in two-way traffic. CBP estimates that the flow of trucks represents close to \$4 billion worth of trade between the United States and Mexico. Additionally, the port processed 2.9 million cars and 2.3 million pedestrians in 2014, for a combined total of 8.3 million people in two way traffic. Truck traffic has been growing at an annualized rate of more than 5% per year since 2010.

The increased activity at the port is anticipated to continue in the next several years. However, in 2007, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) determined through a feasibility study, that there is needed expansion to the Douglas POE facility. In 2013, Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) determined that the existing Douglas POE will not allow CBP to adequately meet its mission within the next five years. Expansions at the facility must be made to ensure that commerce will continue in an efficient manner.

Diminishing federal budgets has tied the hands of many government agencies including the Federal Buildings Fund that GSA utilizes to construct new facilities. As such, the City of Douglas has identified funding sources in the form of a new Private Public Partnership that entails the investment of \$47.0 million required for the development and construction of the project. Since doing so, Douglas has submitted a Section 559 Donation Acceptance Authority proposal that meets all of your requirements and has done its best to answer your questions as quickly and effectively as possible. It is my understanding that the City of Douglas is waiting to receive a formal response from your department as it relates to the Section 559 proposal submitted on December 23, 2014. With this in mind, I am respectfully requesting that you outline for me the next and remaining steps in the Section 559 evaluation process, schedule, rationale and criteria that will be used to evaluate these proposals.

However, efforts to further the position and develop this project outside of the Section 559 Donation Acceptance Authority are being complicated by lengthy and bureaucratic procedures coming from your Department. Subsequently, Mexico has begun to place less emphasis on its portion of the project.

I write today to ask that you inform me and representatives from the City of Douglas as to how they take the next step in this vital project. The City of Douglas is prepared to undertake any all reasonable financing risks to include the issuance of bonds as clearly this project is the life breath for the Douglas community and the region. Additionally, I would like to obtain a copy of the five year construction in process plan for both CBP and the GSA. It is my understanding that Douglas has not been allocated any funds for the construction of the new POE or improvements to the existing facility since 2007 while several projects in New Mexico and Texas continue to be funded. Please explain how CBP, GSA, and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) analyze criteria used to prioritize these types of projects. If I can be of further assistance I am happy to meet with you to discuss how I can advance this critical matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Martha McSally". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Martha McSally
Member of Congress