

HENRY CUELLAR, PH.D.
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 11, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and
Related Programs
House Appropriations Committee
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and
Related Programs
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Rogers:

As you continue your work on the fiscal year 2021 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations bill, I request that you please include the following provision, as an addendum to my original requests:

1. *New Report Language:* The Committee is concerned with the high number of grazing leases recently terminated by the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), at the U.S.-Mexico border. Between 2009 and 2017, 78 grazing leases with ranchers on floodplain property have been terminated, with over a hundred ranchers being given notices to vacate this year. These leases facilitate a cost-effective way for the IBWC to maintain property and clear vegetation along the Rio Grande, while benefiting the local agricultural industry.

Therefore, the Committee provides \$250,000, under the Salaries & Expenses heading, for additional IBWC staffing and other resources to sufficiently review lease compliance, in coordination with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and work with lessees to amend or renew their agreements should an Environmental Assessment support continuance of a grazing lease program. An additional \$250,000 is provided, under this heading, to process public input in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and determine the best use for this land in the interests of the federal government and the environment. The Commission is directed to report back to Committee, within 60 days of the passage of this Act, on progress made in this regard.

Sincerely,



Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress
28th District of Texas