



CITY OF CORONADO

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June 27, 2024

Senator Thomas Umberg
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Room 3240
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 1597 – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Umberg:

On behalf of the City of Coronado, I write in support of Assembly Bill 1597 (Alvarez), which provides \$50 million, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to fund projects that address cross-border water pollution in the New River and Tijuana River. Funds are to be made available to the North American Development Bank for projects that are consistent with the New River Water Quality, Public Health, and River Parkway Development Program or that provide water quality improvements for the Tijuana River. Considering that some of the most effective projects will be located in Mexico, AB 1597 appropriately provides that funds can only be used by entities that have consented, or are already subject, to the jurisdiction of California's courts.

The Tijuana River and the New River are the most polluted rivers in the United States and pose significant acute and long-term health risks for nearby populations. The New River is contaminated by raw sewage, pathogens, trash, and numerous other pollutants that result from industrial activities across the border in Mexicali, Baja California. Similarly, the Tijuana River is often contaminated by raw sewage resulting from the failure or overflow of sewage systems in Mexico.

Cross border water pollution from the Tijuana River Valley is chronic and poses persistent health risks for Californians and the environment, especially those who live in San Diego's South Bay. While both the United States and Mexico have historically provided funding for cross-border pollution prevention projects, funding is always in short supply. As such, even a modest investment in state resources in cross-border pollution prevention projects could result in substantial state savings in avoided health impacts, mitigation measures, and emergency response.

Even more importantly, this bill will help protect the health and safety of hundreds of thousands of Californians who live, work, and recreate in the border region.

For these reasons, the City of Coronado supports AB 1597.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Bailey', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Richard Bailey
Mayor

cc: Assemblymember David Alvarez, District 80
Assemblymember Tasha Boerner, District 77
Senator Catherine Blakespear, District 38
League of California Cities (via email: cityletters@calcities.org)