

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0309

February 27, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chair  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Chair Granger, Vice Chair Collins, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, we urge you to direct no less than \$752 million towards the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Shelter and Services Program (SSP) to reimburse local governments and nongovernmental organizations for providing humanitarian services that assist in the decompression of CBP's holding facilities. Border security and management is a federal government obligation, but Washington has been derelict in this duty for decades, putting the onus on border states and localities to shoulder the burden of the border crisis. Without this funding, border communities like those in Arizona will continue to be forced to manage a crisis they did not create, and to make impossible choices about whether to provide critical services to residents or manage the fallout of the border crisis.

Due to federal capacity constraints, Congress appropriated \$800 million for SSP as part of the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023*. SSP is managed by FEMA in coordination with CBP and is intended to help public and nongovernmental organizations at the state and local levels respond to the ongoing border crisis. The program provides reimbursements to states and localities, as well as nonprofit and nongovernmental social service organizations, for providing shelter, food, transportation, and support services to asylum seekers who have arrived at our southern border and have been legally processed by CBP. This funding is particularly crucial to ensure rural border communities on the front lines of the crisis are not overwhelmed by the increasing number of arriving migrants.

Arizona's border communities and charitable organizations are stretched thin as they continue to assume a federal government function. With Arizona's FY 2023 funding almost fully exhausted, some grantees are winding down operations, creating a risk that migrants will be released into the streets of local Arizona communities. In light of these circumstances, program grantees are struggling to continue providing critical support to keep migrants and communities safe. An infusion of federal funds is needed to ensure that shelters do not face financial difficulties and are not forced to cease their operations, which would shift even more of the burden to our border communities.

To avoid a catastrophic situation, Congress must reaffirm its commitment to border states, localities, and nonprofits by providing significant SSP funds in the final FY 2024 Homeland Security Appropriations bill. This will ensure that they have the federal funding necessary to humanely and adequately respond to the border crisis they did not create. We look forward to engaging with you to reaffirm this commitment.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Mark Kelly  
United State Senator



Kyrsten Sinema  
United States Senator

cc:

The Honorable Chris Murphy, Chair, Homeland Security Subcommittee, Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Dave Joyce, Chair, Homeland Security Subcommittee, House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Katie Britt, Ranking Member, Homeland Security Subcommittee, Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Henry Cuellar, Ranking Member, Homeland Security Subcommittee, House Committee on Appropriations