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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

November 2, 2006

The Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff:

Recent and upcoming commercial and transportation developments along the California border with Mexico are creating a substantial increase in the use of the SENTRI lane at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry. I urge you to take immediate action and create three additional exchangeable SENTRI lanes to serve the rapidly growing number of trusted travelers who pass through this port.

Since the installation of the SENTRI lane at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry in 1995, the SENTRI program has become an essential component of our region's economic success. The SENTRI program is intended to secure our border, as well as to provide a more efficient means of traffic management. After eleven years, the demand for SENTRI has overwhelmingly surpassed its capacity of only one SENTRI lane at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry.

As previously mentioned, several recent developments are contributing to the increased demand for SENTRI crossings at Otay Mesa:

- 1) The opening of the South Bay expressway in June 2007 will, for the first time, connect the Otay Mesa community to the rest of the San Diego highway network, and to a brand new state-of-the-art shopping center in Chula Vista that has just been completed.
- 2) The recent opening of the Corredor 2000 highway in Tijuana, a highway that links Otay Mesa to the beach city of Rosarito, Baja California. The area in and around Rosarito is experiencing tremendous growth in tourist and residential developments aimed at the American market.
- 3) The strong recovery of the manufacturing industry in Baja California, mostly located in Otay Mesa. This industry depends on support services and employees in San Diego.

The Honorable Michael Chertoff

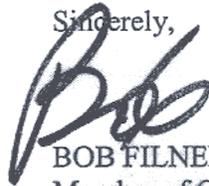
November 1, 2006

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These developments are increasing and shifting traffic to the Otay Mesa Port of Entry. In addition to the four SENTRI lanes at the San Ysidro Port of Entry, our region urgently needs three additional exchangeable SENTRI lanes at Otay Mesa to serve the over seventy thousand SENTRI users in the region. Additionally, the recent announcement that the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol is again accepting applications for the SENTRI program, and doing so in a faster, more efficient manner online, necessitates that the infrastructure be available to accommodate the future increase in users.

I urge you to assist our regional Customs and Border Protection office in securing our borders and facilitating legal and low-risk traffic. I look forward to your response and to a timeline for when San Diego can expect the much needed additional SENTRI lanes in Otay Mesa.

Sincerely,



BOB FILNER
Member of Congress

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Cc: Commissioner W. Ralph Basham
Assistant Commissioner Jayson Ahern
Adele Fasano, San Diego Field Director