

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 14, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Chairwoman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Colleagues:

As Congressional and Appropriations Committee leaders continue working on a disaster supplemental appropriations bill, which may also address southern border related agency funding requests, we respectfully request the inclusion of the necessary legislative provisions and funding to reimburse state and local governments and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for costs incurred providing humanitarian relief to asylum seekers who have arrived at the southern border, many of whom are fleeing terror and violence in their home nations.

It is clear that the federal government's policies have put a strain on local resources and contributed to the humanitarian crisis along the border. According to recent reports, U.S. Border Patrol has released over 4,000 migrants applying for asylum in the United States in Las Cruces since April 12. New Mexico and its communities are facing new and unbudgeted costs caring for asylum-seeking migrants, as federal agencies have not provided for their sufficient shelter and humanitarian needs. These costs are expected to continue.

As you are aware, migration flows from Central America to the United States are often due to unimaginable violence, corruption, extreme poverty, and instability in their home countries. We fundamentally believe that we are a nation that does not turn our back on the innocent victims of persecution abroad and commend our state and local communities for stepping up, volunteering, and serving asylum seekers in need.

There is bipartisan precedent for such reimbursements to communities relating to providing humanitarian relief to unaccompanied children and adults accompanied by a minor after entering the United States. Given the impact of the humanitarian needs on our southern border, and the strain on state, local, and NGO resources, we believe it is critical that Congress work to ensure that border communities and NGOs are not unduly burdened by the cost of administering emergency aid, which is the more appropriate responsibility of federal agencies.

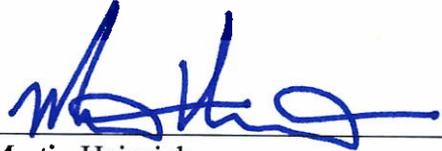
We urge your support for these funds in the upcoming disaster supplemental bill and stand ready to work with you on this issue.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



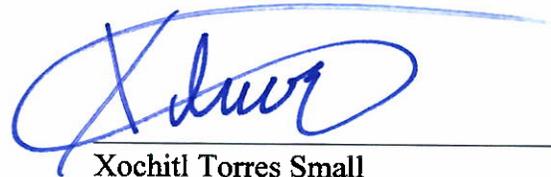
Tom Udall  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



Ben Ray Luján  
United States Representative



Xochitl Torres Small  
United States Representative



Deb Haaland  
United States Representative