

Thank you, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole, for hosting this Member Day hearing.

I have the honor of representing El Paso, Texas in Congress and am truly grateful to have the opportunity to be advocating for the needs of our community. This subcommittee has played a critical role in helping communities like mine overcome the many issues the COVID-19 pandemic has presented us with over the past two years and I look forward to working with you this fiscal year to address the many challenges still facing El Pasoans.

I'd like to begin by first thanking the subcommittee for the \$900 thousand dollar increase allocated in the Fiscal Year 2022 omnibus for the U.S. Mexico Border Health Commission. Unfortunately, for years the U.S. section of the commission was overlooked and underfunded. This became increasingly apparent at the beginning of and during the COVID-19 pandemic when the border region was disproportionately impacted by the virus. The funding increase this subcommittee allocated is giving the U.S. section the ability to again reengage with their Mexican counterparts, begin work on Healthy Border 2030, and perform basic functions like hire more staff and maintain a permanent office in El Paso. However, it is critical that we keep providing the U.S. section of the commission with the resources it needs to continue to play a role in binational health policy. That is why I support the President's Fiscal Year 2023 request to increase the commission's funding by \$900 thousand dollars and urge the subcommittee to include this funding in your final bill.

Next, I would like to thank the subcommittee for providing funding for my community projects in Fiscal Year 2022. These projects will have an immediate impact on those that need it

most. That is why I am excited to discuss the projects I have submitted for your consideration for the Fiscal Year 2023 community project process.

The first project is the El Paso Children's Hospital Pediatric Mobile Clinic. If funded, this project will play a key role in expanding healthcare to traditionally underserved parts of El Paso, like colonias. El Paso Children's Hospital would use these funds to purchase and outfit a mobile clinic with the goal of providing both basic and specialty pediatric healthcare throughout El Paso County. It would also allow the hospital to provide several other services like administering flu shots to young El Pasoans who are unable to visit a doctor regularly.

The second project is the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso Border Health Center. I truly believe the border region is a unique place that faces its own challenges when it comes to healthcare. Our majority Latino population has seen dramatic increases in chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes, but because the border region is vast and diverse, it is difficult to keep track of these trends. The proposed Border Health Center would create a telemedicine and monitoring program to provide early interventions to slow the rise of chronic diseases while also conducting research to benefit federal agencies. This transformational project would help change lives by trying to better understand the root causes of the healthcare challenges we face on the border.

The final project is the El Paso Independent School District After-School Community Learning Center. This project would allow the school district to expand after-school learning programs to parts of the community that are traditionally underserved like Segundo Barrio. By extending more resources to these parts of the city, the school district will be able to reach more students and give them the tools they would need to succeed.

Thank you to the subcommittee for this opportunity and consideration of my requests.