



PIMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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Pima County Board of Supervisors
130 W. Congress Street, 11th Floor
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Honorable Chair and Supervisors,

I regret that I will not be able to attend the Board's meeting on January 21, 2020. It is my understanding that the Operation Stonegarden Grant will be considered at this meeting. My commitment to our continued participation in the Operation Stonegarden Grant Program remains steadfast. However, I have been asked to participate in the inaugural meeting of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. The U.S. Department of Justice will host the Commission meeting on Wednesday, January 22, 2020, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the Great Hall of the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. I have been invited to attend in my role as the Vice President of Major County Sheriffs of America, but I also represent Pima County and our collective interest in moving criminal justice reform forward. The opportunity to be on the ground level of this effort should not be missed. We are doing much in our county with respect to examining the criminal justice system that may serve as a guide on a national level. Further, ideas may come from my involvement that would advance our efforts locally.

Approving the Operation Stonegarden Grant ensures that we can meet the public safety threats we face due to our proximity to the international border. These threats are real and I have a fundamental responsibility to address them. We are still seeing record amounts of hard drugs coming across the border and into our community. We realize what we seize under our current efforts are but a small fraction of what is coming into the country. We know that migrants are continuing to be victimized as they come across the border. My deputies recovered several sets of human remains in just the past few weeks. Participation in Operation Stonegarden provides us more capacity to address these threats.

The County Administrator correctly points out that there are collateral costs associated with our participation in this grant program. Those costs have always been present, but rising pension costs have brought them to the forefront. As good stewards of our citizen's tax dollars, it is right that we give these costs attention. The fact is it is easy to quantify these collateral costs. What is impossible to quantify is the cost of not participating. To deny that potential costs of not participating exist is intellectually dishonest. We know our presence serves as a deterrent to drug and human traffickers. It reduces the flow of illegal drugs into our community. Our visible presence serves to

potentially diminish the victimization of migrants. Participation in this grant program has offsetting benefits that while hard to quantify are in fact present.

The Board, evidenced by more than a decade of approving the grant, has previously understood the importance of it in the address of public safety issues. That is why it was quickly approved in the past. Nothing about the nature of the public safety challenges we face has changed. In fact, they are more pronounced now. The Board should approve the Operation Stonegarden Grant for the same reasons it did previously that being the clear recognition that doing so does benefit public safety in our county.

I have reviewed the information submitted to the Board by the County Administrator. In addition, I believe he shared with you a communication I drafted to him several weeks ago. I believe this provides us a compromise path forward. It addresses immediate concerns about collateral costs to the County. We mitigate those costs by more thoughtfully applying the overtime and more closely monitoring it. This plan provides a way to move us forward in the future. The public has frequently stated that it wishes us to reduce our dependence on federal resources to address our border-related public safety challenges. They have said to give the Sheriff's Department what it needs to perform these tasks. This compromise plan provides a path in that direction. I am not certain that our federal partners will be able to provide supplemental funding for straight time employees in the future. However, the rules appear to make doing so allowable. We need to commit ourselves to placing Sheriff's Department personnel at our Three Points facility in the future and then supplement our efforts with a nominal amount of Stonegarden overtime. Remaining in the Stonegarden program provides invaluable resource and intelligence sharing that is critical to our efforts.

I ask that the Board approve the proposal brought forward by the County Administrator and accept of the Stonegarden Grant. Public safety in Pima County requires that we move forward on this issue.

Respectively,



Mark Napier
Sheriff