



WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

M. Michael Rounds
Governor of South Dakota
Chairman

Dave Freudenthal
Governor of Wyoming
Vice Chairman

Pam O. Inmann
Executive Director

Headquarters:
1600 Broadway
Suite 1700
Denver, CO 80202

303-623-9378
Fax 303-534-7309

Washington, D.C. Office:
400 N. Capitol Street, N.W.
Suite 388
Washington, D.C. 20001

202-624-5402
Fax 202-624-7707

www.westgov.org

May 2, 2007

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski, Chair
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
144 Dirksen SOB
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ted Stevens, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
144 Dirksen SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Mikulski and Senator Stevens:

As the Subcommittee considers the fiscal year 2008 appropriations bill for Commerce, Justice and Science, the Western Governors' Association urges you to continue your past support for the following key programs that are of vital importance to citizens in western states.

The matter of illegal immigration remains a great concern to the western states. We are pleased that the President's budget proposes an increase for the Customs and Border Enforcement agency. We are also pleased that the President's proposed FY 08 budget includes \$1 billion to physically secure and control the southwest border; and that the agency will hire 3,000 border patrol agents and improve processing at points of entry. But we ask that interior efforts, like the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program, not be neglected.

We ask for your continued assistance in the fight against methamphetamine abuse. It is important that our state and local law enforcement agencies receive help from the Drug Enforcement Agency in cleaning-up these dangerous and toxic meth labs.


We also seek your support for improved drought monitoring and prediction. Water supplies in the West are strained by many competing demands. Droughts only further compound these demands. Last year, Congress authorized the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS). In its budget, the Administration has included funding for NIDIS to be implemented. We support this funding proposal wholeheartedly and ask that it be included in the FY 08 appropriations for NOAA.

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
The Honorable Ted Stevens
May 2, 2007
Page 2


On a related matter, NASA's budget request for the Landsat Data Continuity Mission (LDCM), under its Earth Systematic Missions Program, failed to include funding for a thermal infrared (TIR) sensor on Landsat 8, scheduled to be launched in 2011. This is a serious omission. Landsat TIR data is now used in ten western states to remotely measure and calculate water consumption by crops and natural vegetation, as well as administer existing water rights and interstate compacts. The opportunities to improve water management are only beginning to be realized. Until such time as an alternative technology to provide similar information is available, Landsat TIR data will continue to be vital for future decision-making at federal, state, local and international levels. We urge you to include funding for it in FY 2008.

In closing, we hope the Subcommittee will continue to invest in these priorities that provide so much benefit to the West.

Sincerely,



M. Michael Rounds
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The Honorable Alan Mollohan, Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-310 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-310 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Representative Frelinghuysen:

As the Subcommittee considers the fiscal year 2008 appropriations bill for Commerce, Justice and Science, the Western Governors' Association urges you to continue your past support for the following key programs that are of vital importance to citizens in western states.

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