

Strengthening Economies in the Southwest Border Region

Communities along the U.S.-Mexico border regularly demonstrate their strength and resilience, and they deserve federal and business investment that is equitable to other regions across the nation. The Southwest Border Regional Commission (SBRC) is a strong mechanism to facilitate federal and business investment that can spur job growth and economic prosperity in the region.

- Investment in critical infrastructure will enhance conditions for growth. Coupling private investment in new industries with public investment in infrastructure can chart a path towards increased job opportunities, and greater regional prosperity.
- Trade in the border region is an engine for growth in the United States. New investment in trade-related industries and infrastructure can draw on this regional advantage and ensure the economic benefits reach border communities.
- Clean energy can draw upon existing funding and local resources to spur local growth.
- Workforce programs ready workers in the region for emerging industries requiring new skills.

Established in 2008, the SBRC can spur equitable and lasting growth in the region. Regional commissions with robust funding have shown that such institutions successfully achieve development goals.

- Though the SBRC now has a Federal Co-Chair and has started to receive appropriations, its funding levels still lag behind other regional commissions. For example, the two commissions created in the same year as the SBRC have since received between nearly 3 and 350 times more funding per person living in the region.
- The SBRC should receive funding equal to that of its counterparts, giving it the ability to support much-needed infrastructure, health care, and development programs in the region.

Appropriations for the SBRC Lag Behind the Funding Levels of Other Commissions

Statistic of Interest	Southwest Border Regional Commission	Northern Border Regional Commission	Southeast Crescent Regional Commission	Northern Great Plains Regional Authority	Delta Regional Authority	Denali Commission	Appalachian Regional Commission
Authorization Year (Fiscal Year)	2008	2008	2008	2002	2001	1998	1965
Total Appropriations Since 1990 (2023 Dollars)	\$9.2M	\$380M	\$35M	\$4.8M	\$659M	\$976M	\$7,372M
Per Capita Total Appropriations (2023 Dollars)	\$0.26	\$90.90	\$0.69	\$0.26	\$67.24	\$1,325.85	\$282.84

Source: 2021 American Community Survey (5-year), Congressional Research Service and Joint Economic Committee calculations.

Note: The Great Lakes Authority is not included, as it has not yet received appropriations