Imperial Valley Press
THE SOURCE FOR NEWS
April 5, 2011
50 CENTS
GATEWAY TO IMPERIAL COUNTY

Congressman urges border funding

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U.S. Rep. Bob Filner, D-Chula Vista, and other members of the Congressional Border Caucus haven't given up on the Calexico Port-of-Entry Project and urged the House speaker in a letter Monday not to abandon project funding.

The $84 million dollars in funding for the General Services Administration project was recently eliminated from next fiscal year's budget by House Republicans.

"I'm disappointed that not a single Republican member of the Border Caucus would support border infrastructure funding," Filner wrote in a press release. "I will continue to press the Republican majority to fund border projects. It's vital on both sides of our border."

The letter was signed by Filner and five other members of Congress who also represent border states.

In the letter, addressed to House Speaker John Boehner, facts and figures regarding land ports-of-entry's impact on commerce are outlined.

The letter also cites a 2006 study that estimates port-of-entry border wait times to result in about $2 billion in lost economic output in the San Diego region. Each additional 15 minutes represents $1 billion more in productivity loss and also loss of 134,000 bi-national border region jobs, according to the study.