



IMPERIAL VALLEY REGIONAL CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE

March 3, 2024

The Honorable Stephen C. Padilla
Chair, Senate Governmental Organization Committee
1020 N Street, Room 584
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 461 (Padilla): State Surplus Property: City of Imperial

Dear Senator Padilla,

On behalf of the Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce (IVRCC), I am pleased to offer our strong support of SB 461 by Senator Padilla which will facilitate the transfer of the old California Highway Patrol headquarters to the City of Imperial for use as a municipal jail.

IVRCC is dedicated to serving the Imperial Valley businesses and promoting community prosperity through advocacy, economic development, connectivity and business education.

Currently, the City of Imperial Police Department operates from a converted juvenile detention facility that houses multiple city functions, including City Hall and Public Services. This arrangement presents several operational challenges including: a lack of adequate space for essential law enforcement functions such as evidence storage and security concerns for law enforcement operations as multiple city departments are housed in one building; and an outdated infrastructure that does not meet contemporary law enforcement needs.

The City of Imperial and the Police Department have conducted internal reviews of available space and unfortunately no existing city-owned properties are available which remotely meet the needs for police operations and any current property would require extensive and costly modifications to meet the Police Department's needs. Given the city's location and its status as the oldest city in the County, no suitable commercial properties exist within city limits.

The California Highway Patrol station located at 2331 CA-867, Imperial CA, 92251 (APN 064-433-010- County of Imperial) will soon be vacated. The facility is located within the boundaries of the City of Imperial. An Acquisition by the City would present a cost-effective solution that would accommodate the City and Police Department's growth requirements while enhancing public safety services for the expanding community. The facility is already configured for law enforcement operations and would allow good accessibility for community members and is centrally located within the city. The facility would minimize renovation costs and the need to convert a non-law enforcement facility. At the same time, the CHP facility would be unsuitable for housing development given the unique characteristics of the property such as fuel storage and refueling stations, evidence lockers and prison detention cells. Exchanging the property from CHP to local law enforcement will make the best and highest use of the existing facility.

SB 461 would facilitate the transfer of the CHP facility to the City of Imperial. By transferring the facility to the City of Imperial, we can save taxpayer dollars while allowing the City to focus its limited resources on housing development and other priorities.

IVRCC believes that success and safety of the business community and the City of Imperial can best be served by supporting this transfer of property which will provide a better working environment for the police department without putting any financial strain on the city and its residents by expanding and upgrading the existing location or any other potential locations.

For these reasons, SB 461(Padilla) would further IVRCC's goal of promoting community prosperity and economic development, and we are proud to support SB 461(Padilla) and encourage your "aye" vote when it is heard in your committee.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sher Cowie
President
Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce