

# United States Senate

March 7, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

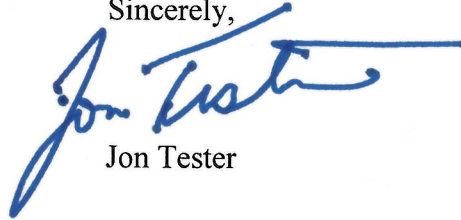
I write today to urge you to include sufficient funding for border security technology in the Fiscal Year 2023 Homeland Security Appropriations bill ahead of the March 22<sup>nd</sup> deadline. In addition to supporting investments in the latest technologies to combat drug trafficking, Congress must also provide sufficient funding to ensure that this technology can be installed and utilized in the field. Montana is facing a fentanyl crisis, and folks from every corner of my state tell me they want to see a solution. We must work together to ensure the agents, officers, and law enforcement personnel working to secure our border have the tools and resources they need to stop dangerous drugs and criminals before they enter our country.

Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) technology and scanners are critical to securing our border and combatting the fentanyl crisis. These scanners allow Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents to scan vehicles and cargo in order to detect fentanyl and other dangerous contraband that criminals are trying to smuggle into our country. However, according to CBP Commissioner Troy Miller, many of these scanners are currently sitting in warehouses unused because Senator Mitch McConnell and politicians in Washington blocked bipartisan border security legislation that would have appropriated funds to install them. This technology isn't worth its weight until Congress quits the political games and provides the funding needed to get it deployed and operational in the field.

The news about the uninstalled scanners comes on the heels of reports that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is considering mass releases of migrants because of budget shortfalls. Let's be clear, Congress had a solution to address both of these issues – the bipartisan border security deal. However, some of our colleagues choose to score cheap political points instead of passing the strongest border security bill in decades. It is now up to you all to provide CBP, ICE, and Border Patrol with the funding they need to secure the southern border through the appropriations process.

Every day that this funding is delayed and this technology sits unused is a win for the cartels and makes Montana and our country less safe. Congress must act quickly to provide this funding and ensure that the men and women working to secure our border have the tools and resources to do their job.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Tester". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jon Tester