

**Washington, DC** - Today Representatives Charlie Gonzalez (TX-20), Ciro Rodriguez (TX-23), and Lamar Smith (TX-21) met with Undersecretary Jay Cohen of the Science and Technology Directorate at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to discuss the potential for a new National Bio Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF). San Antonio was selected as one of five finalists for the site out of an initial seventeen proposals.

Construction activities for NBAF would result in between 1,300 and 1,614 temporary jobs, generating between \$138 million and \$183.9 million in labor income and \$12.5 million and \$24.7 million in state and local taxes. Generally there would be between 250 and 350 employees at the facility. This number includes researchers, technical support and operations specialists with an estimated income between \$26.8 million and \$30.4 million annually.

The proposed NBAF would research high-consequence biological threats involving zoonotic (i.e., transmitted from animals to humans) and foreign animal diseases. It would allow basic research; diagnostic development, testing and validation; advanced countermeasure development; and training for high-consequence livestock diseases.

Below are statements from the members of Congress who attended the meeting:

“As we told Under Secretary Cohen, San Antonio is an ideal location for the proposed facility. Our community has much to offer, including a talented workforce and a strong research and business infrastructure, which would ensure the successful operations of the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility,” said Congressman Charlie Gonzalez (TX-20). “This morning's meeting was a great opportunity to make our case to the Under Secretary and I'm optimistic that the Department of Homeland Security will quickly realize that San Antonio presents unparalleled resources,” he added.

Congressman Rodriguez (TX-23), a member of the Homeland Security Appropriations subcommittee, said “We believe San Antonio is the best location for this facility for a number of reasons including the infrastructure we offer, the support of the local community, the research facilities we either already have and the enormous potential we have to expand. I'll continue to work with our bipartisan Congressional delegation, state and local officials to do everything we can to bring this world class research facility and its economic impact to San Antonio.

“Our meeting with Under Secretary Cohen enabled the San Antonio delegation to highlight the many reasons our community is so well-positioned to host the facility,” said Congressman Lamar Smith (TX-21), a member of the House Homeland Security Committee. “We have the right mix of resources, expertise, infrastructure, workforce, and community support needed for the NBAF to succeed. Not many cities can compete with that.”

###