

February 11, 2022



The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, United States House of Representatives
235 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

I write you to request changes to the Water Resources Development Act of 2022 (WRDA 2022), which will have a major impact on our waterfront.

Your crucial support for changes in WRDA 2020 (Section 152, the “seismic equity” amendment) made key policy changes in the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) impacting the entire nation. Prior to your work on this issue, local and state governments in seismic hazard regions across the country (including Alaska, Arkansas, California, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, Oregon, South Carolina and Washington) faced a significant obstacle seeking federal assistance. Simply put, while flood benefits are calculated the same way everywhere, it is significantly more costly to construct flood control infrastructure in seismically active regions, making it more difficult to meet USACE’s key benefit-cost-ratio test.

While the intent of changes to WRDA 2020 was to impact all flood risk management projects, a legal interpretation of the WRDA 2020 text limited its scope to riverine flood risk management projects. Port staff now recommend clarifying that the seismic equity amendment in WRDA 2020 should apply to both riverine and coastal projects alike.

Likewise, WRDA 2020 modifications to the authority underlying the San Francisco Waterfront Coastal Flood Study would be strengthened by clarifying that Section 203 of WRDA 2020 applies to both the Pacific and San Francisco Bay coastlines of Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo counties and takes into account ‘high tide flooding’, or flooding related to global sea level rise.

As you know well, San Francisco’s Embarcadero Seawall protects downtown San Francisco, a national register historic district, a regional transit system, MUNI light rail, utilities and wastewater systems and other assets of cultural significance to San Francisco and beyond.

Thank you for your tireless support of the people of San Francisco and beyond. Please do not hesitate to reach out if there is every anything I can do to assist in your efforts.

Sincerely,

Elaine Forbes, Executive Director
Port of San Francisco

cc: Robert Edmonson, Chief of Staff, House Minority Leader Representative Nancy Pelosi
Edward McCaffrey, Office of Mayor London Breed

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