

JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER
3RD DISTRICT, SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
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Congress of the United States
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June 18, 2013

Jo Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army
US Department of the Army
108 Army Pentagon, RM 3E446
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy,

I am writing you to inform you of a critical situation that has developed for the small maritime ports of our nation and in my district. Without your immediate assistance, the very existence of these communities is threatened. At a recent meeting with the US Army Corps of Engineers, representatives from the Ports of Chinook and Ilwaco were informed that they would not receive maintenance dredging of their channels this year, nor could they expect assistance for FY 2014.

In many instances, the ports are the most vital link our communities have for economic activity. The oyster beds of Pacific County provide over a quarter of our nation's oysters, and the county is home to vibrant shellfish, fishing, and seafood processing industries. For the towns in my district and up and down the West Coast that depend upon these ports, these industries are the major employers and economic lifelines for their area. With the loss of safe access in and out of the channels for the boats that deliver their raw products for market, they stand to suffer severe economic impacts that could continue for years if these industries are forced to close their doors or move out of the area.

I request that you give strong consideration to the small ports of this nation and reprioritize some funding for FY 2013 that would allow maintenance dredging of the small ports. I have submitted a request on behalf of our small ports in the FY 2014 Energy and Water appropriation, and it is my sincere hope that Congress will be able to provide them with assistance next year. However, we must depend upon you to lend assistance this year, and their fate rests in your hands. Please do everything in your power to assist them.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress