

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 20, 2007

Honorable James L. Oberstar  
Chairman  
House Committee on Transportation  
And Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar:

We are writing to urge your support for Section 4083 of H.R. 1495 (the Water Resources Development Act of 2007) as passed the House. Section 4083 would allow the Army Corps of Engineers to consider potential economic impact to the Elliott Bay Seawall in Seattle, Washington from a seismic caused seawall failure when making a determination on participation of the Corps in the rehabilitation of the Seawall. The language would also enable the City to receive credit in future years for work previously funded and completed by the City.

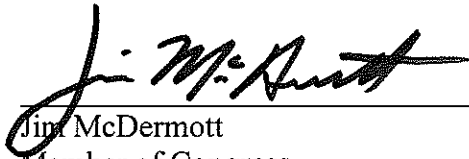
The existing Elliott Bay Seawall has exceeded its design life and is highly vulnerable, particularly to a seismic event. Several scenarios, including an earthquake, could cause a catastrophic failure of the seawall which would undoubtedly result in disastrous damage to person, public services and infrastructure, and private property. The Corps interprets its storm damage reduction authority as limited to considering wind and tide generated waves as the primary cause of seawall failure, not seismic activity.

Infrastructure of statewide significance lays adjacent to the seawall and could be damaged or destroyed in the event of a failure of the Seawall. This includes a major state highway (SR 99) that carries approximately 110,000 vehicles per day, rail lines that serve the Port of Seattle and commuter traffic, and the busiest transit hub for the state ferry system that handles 25,000 commuters daily. Additional infrastructure susceptible to damage includes a fire station (land and marine), public aquarium, historic buildings and cultural sites, trade center, hotels and high density residential real estate.

The credit and cost reimbursement language is necessary to keep the Seawall replacement project on schedule so that the work on that project can occur concurrently with a major highway construction project, the replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Proceeding with the study based on the cost-share amounts from the Corps would result in significant delay to the project. The credit and cost reimbursement language will allow the project sponsor, the city of Seattle, to front load funding to keep the project moving on schedule and receive credit and reimbursement for its participation.

As you work to resolve the differences between the House and Senate versions of the Water Resourced Development Act, we strongly encourage you to retain Section 4083 from the House version in the final version of the bill. Thank you for your consideration.

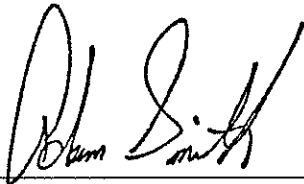
Sincerely,



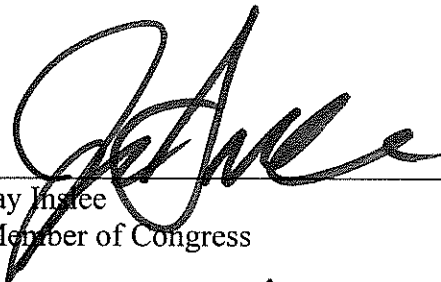
Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress



Norm Dicks  
Member of Congress



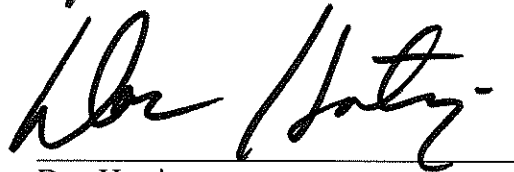
Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



Jay Inslee  
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress



Doc Hastings  
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



Dave Reichert  
Member of Congress



Brian Baird  
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