

October 22, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

As you prepare your Fiscal Year 2016 Budget for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), we strongly urge you to request increased funding for USGS's earthquake-related programs, including an additional \$16.1 million for the development and operation of a West Coast Earthquake Early Warning (EEW) System.

After the recent magnitude 6.0 earthquake in Napa, California that killed one person, injured more than 300 people, and caused an estimated \$300 million in damages, as well as the September magnitude 4.0 earthquake that struck the Puget Sound region, we are once again reminded of how important it is that the United States has a robust earthquake early warning system.

Earthquake Early Warning is proven technology that is already fully operational in countries like Japan and Mexico. USGS, in conjunction with the California Institute of Technology, the University of California, Berkeley, the University of Washington, and the University of Oregon, is currently working to adapt the technology for the West Coast of the United States and has developed a prototype system for test users along the West Coast.

During the earthquake in Napa County, test users at UC Berkeley received ten seconds of warning, and those in San Francisco and San Jose received even more. This is enough warning to take steps necessary to prevent casualties and mitigate destruction, including slowing or stopping trains and cars; turning off supplies of oil, natural gas, and chemicals; securing large manufacturing equipment; stopping elevators and opening their doors; and securing sensitive computer data.

The effectiveness of EEW largely depends on the number and placement of sensors to ensure that there is adequate coverage wherever an earthquake may hit—and this requires additional resources. Congress recognizes the value of this system and has demonstrated its commitment to providing additional resources for EEW by including additional funding in the House and Senate Fiscal Year 2015 Interior Appropriations bills.

Therefore, we urge you to request in your Budget at least an additional \$16.1 million for the development of this system so that the West Coast will be prepared for the next catastrophic earthquake. This is proven technology that will save lives and reduce the economic impact of an earthquake; it simply needs to be properly funded.

Thank you for considering our request. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us or have your staff contact Josh Esquivel in Senator Dianne Feinstein's Office (joshua_esquivel@feinstein.senate.gov) or Courtney Fogwell in Representative Adam Schiff's Office (courtney.fogwell@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Adam Schiff
United States Representative

Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

Xavier Becerra
United States Representative

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

Suzanne Bonamici
United States Representative

Jeff Merkley
United States Senator

Julia Brownley
United States Representative

Patty Murray
United States Senator

Tony Cárdenas
United States Representative

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

Judy Chu
United States Representative

Jim Costa
United States Representative

Peter DeFazio
United States Representative

Anna G. Eshoo
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Sam Farr
United States Representative

Janice Hahn
United States Representative

Mike Honda
United States Representative

Jared Huffman
United States Representative

Barbara Lee
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Zoe Lofgren
United States Representative

Alan Lowenthal
United States Representative

Betty McCollum
United States Representative

Jim McDermott
United States Representative

Jerry McNerney
United States Representative

George Miller
United States Representative

Grace Napolitano
United States Representative

Scott Peters
United States Representative

Lucille Roybal-Allard
United States Representative

Linda Sanchez
United States Representative

Brad Sherman
United States Representative

Adam Smith
United States Representative

Jackie Speier
United States Representative

Eric Swalwell
United States Representative

Mike Thompson
United States Representative

Maxine Waters
United States Representative

Henry Waxman
United States Representative

cc: The Honorable Shaun Donovan
Director of the Office of Management and Budget

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary of the Interior