

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 28, 2019

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies Appropriations
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman McCollum and Ranking Member Joyce:

As you craft the Fiscal Year 2020 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you provide the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) with \$18.6 million for the construction, operation and maintenance of a West Coast Earthquake Early Warning System, also called ShakeAlert.

The USGS, in collaboration with Caltech, UC Berkeley, the University of Washington, and the University of Oregon, developed ShakeAlert, which detects waves radiating from the epicenter of an earthquake. The ShakeAlert signal can be used to provide people with several to tens of seconds of warning in California, and up to a few minutes in Washington and Oregon through their phones, computers and other media. This is a "smart infrastructure" investment that will ultimately provide advanced notice so people can take cover, automated systems can be triggered to slow down trains and manage the power grid, doctors can pause surgeries, and more. The technology has been tested and proven to work effectively.

FEMA has estimated that earthquakes cost the United States, averaged over the long term, more than \$5 billion a year. This common-sense investment will save lives, protect businesses, and could make a real difference in more rapid recovery for local communities, the federal government and the economy as a whole.

We appreciate the increased support the Committee has provided in recent fiscal years. In October 2018, USGS released the revised technical implementation plan for the ShakeAlert system, which included an updated operations and maintenance budget of \$28.6 million a year. Providing \$18.6 million for ShakeAlert in FY 2020 will help USGS scale up toward this revised funding level.

While we cannot predict when and where the next major earthquake will hit, we must do all we can to prepare ourselves so that we can mitigate the injuries, destruction, and chaos as much as possible. We appreciate your consideration of our request, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,


Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress


Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress


Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



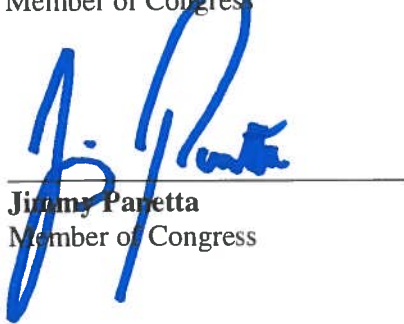
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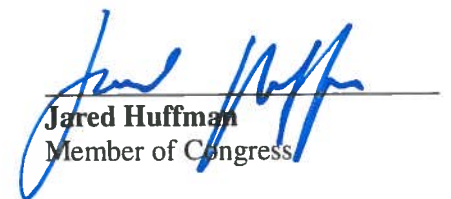
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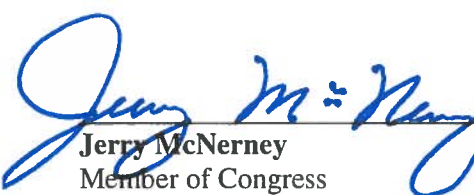
Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



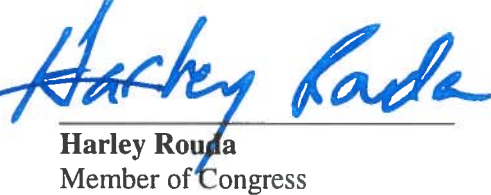
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