

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2022

Chairwoman Chellie Pingree
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
And Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member David Joyce
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
And Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Pingree and Ranking Member Joyce:

As you craft the Fiscal Year 2023 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you provide the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) with \$28.6 million for the construction, operation and maintenance of a West Coast Earthquake Early Warning System, also called ShakeAlert.

The USGS has been working with the California Institute of Technology; the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Washington; the University of Oregon; the University of Nevada, Reno; Central Washington University, and state emergency services agencies to develop and deploy the system. ShakeAlert detects waves radiating from the epicenter of an earthquake, and 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 to 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. ShakeAlert public alerts, both using the Wireless Emergency Alerts system and smartphone app capabilities, first became available across California in 2019. Recent milestones include Oregon beginning statewide public use of ShakeAlert in March 2021, and Washington rolling out ShakeAlert public alerting in May 2021.

With concern regarding the heightened risk of a major earthquake resulting from increased seismic activity near the San Andreas Fault, coupled with the prospect of a magnitude 9.0 earthquake along the Pacific Northwest coast, there is public demand for EEW to be fully operational. When major earthquake events occur—and we know it is “when” and not “if”—they have the potential to be one of the costliest and deadliest disasters the United States has ever faced. Given the economic and health strains of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more critical than ever that we limit the potential damage of compounding crises. FEMA has estimated that earthquakes cost the United States, averaged over the long term, more than \$5 billion a year. This common-sense investment in Earthquake Early Warning 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.

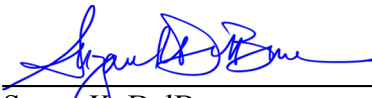
We appreciate the increased support the Committee has provided in recent fiscal years. The USGS 2018 Updated Technical Implementation Plan for ShakeAlert states that the funding required for a robust earthquake early warning system for the West Coast is \$28.6 million annually. Funding for FY22 met our ask of \$28.6 million and we now ask the Committee to continue this funding for ShakeAlert for FY23.

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



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



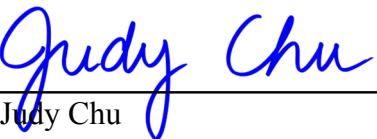
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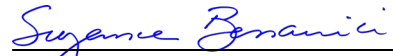
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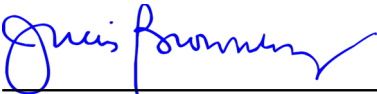
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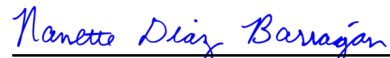
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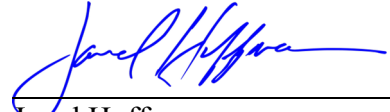
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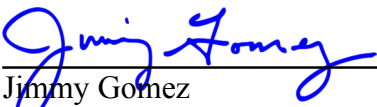
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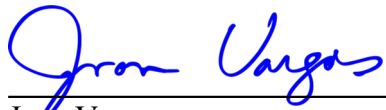
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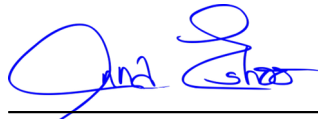
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