



April 14, 2010

The Honorable Adam Smith
United States Representative
2402 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Smith:

Thank you for making the protection of our communities' homes and businesses from the increased threat of flooding due to damage at the Howard Hanson Dam a high priority for federal resources. Last year, your support for federal assistance for emergency preparedness, strengthening the levees, and partially repairing the Dam helped mitigate some of the risk and began to restore confidence that this threat will be resolved.

Now that the winter flood season is over, there is a collective sense of relief and a renewed focus on what can be done before the start of the next flood season to restore the Dam's capacity to protect the Green River Valley from flooding.

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has identified such an opportunity. The USACE proposes a repair project to expand the existing grout curtain within the damaged right abutment of the Dam. At a regional briefing on March 18, Seattle District Commander, Colonel Anthony Wright, stated the repair work would temporarily restore the flood control capacity of the Dam to the same level that has protected the Valley for nearly 60 years. This repair would buy valuable time until a permanent fix of the Dam can be constructed.

We request your support for an emergency appropriation of \$44 million for this critical repair of the Dam this year. With this funding, construction can begin as soon as possible to restore the full flood protection of the Dam in time for the coming flood season. We recognize the difficulty in securing an appropriation of this size outside of the federal budget cycle, but we urge you to explore all avenues to do so given the urgency of the threat and the magnitude of what's at stake for our communities and the state.

We greatly appreciated your successful efforts to direct the Corps to expedite a permanent solution. We also request your support for the appropriation of additional funds in fiscal year 2011 for the Army Corps's work on design and preliminary construction of the permanent repair to the Dam. This is a necessary precursor before a request for full funding for a permanent repair can be made for the President's fiscal years 2012 and 2013 budgets.

Not only is the Green River Valley home to 28,000 residents, it is also the fourth largest wholesale and distribution center in the United States. With over 100 million square feet of industrial and commercial space worth nearly \$30 billion, the Green River Valley supports over 1,000 businesses with 100,000 employees that generate \$21.9 billion in gross business income. Over 30 percent of King County's aerospace jobs are in the Valley. As Arun Raha, the chief economist for the State of Washington noted recently, "that area is the industrial heartland of the state."

Many important federal, regional and corporate facilities in the Green River Valley rely on the Howard Hanson Dam for flood protection. They include the Boeing Space Center and key national defense programs, Boeing Commercial Airplane Headquarters, the Seattle Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, the regional headquarters of the Federal Aviation Administration, corporate headquarters for REI, the Norm Maleng Regional Justice Center, and the Puget Sound Blood Center's Scholfield Laboratory for testing the region's blood supply, just to name a few.

Thanks to the proactive steps our local, state, and federal agencies took last fall, we were able to limit the number of businesses leaving the Valley. Their departure could have crippled our communities already struggling under the national recession.

To preserve the economic viability of our communities, it is vital that regional, national, and international markets continue to see progress in reducing the risk of flooding and restoring the full capacity of the Dam. We recognize the cost is great, but the cost of a flood would be far greater. Real and timely progress on the interim repair and the permanent fix proposed by the USACE would greatly reduce that risk and restore confidence in what is a significant economic engine for Washington State.

We are profoundly grateful for the support you continue to give in dealing with this crisis. We look forward to working with you to finally remove this threat to our communities by fully restoring the Howard Hanson Dam to its historic capacity as soon as possible. Please let us know what we can do to help achieve this goal.

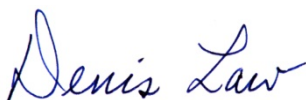
With regards,



Pete Lewis
Mayor of Auburn



Suzette Cooke
Mayor of Kent



Denis Law
Mayor of Renton



Jim Haggerton
Mayor of Tukwila