

Thank you, Chairman DeFazio, Ranking Member Graves, and the rest of the Transportation and Infrastructure committee members for hosting this opportunity. The success that WRDA has had during these divided times is a testament to the committee's willingness to work across the aisle and I hope that work will be just as successful for WRDA 2022.

With the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, our definition of what constitutes as infrastructure has grown tremendously. This paradigm shift is most notable in the water project funding we included in the law, which has been allocated for districts across the country. I am hopeful that the committee's work here will build on that success to tackle the many backlogged projects that are sadly still unfunded even with increased investments. With IJA passed and having fully funded the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, we should have ample opportunity to meet the needs of all our districts.

One such project that crosses these jurisdictional boundaries is the Newport Big Creek Dams Improvement Project. I mentioned this project during the WRDA Member Day in 2020, and I would like to highlight it again as a project that has a real impact for my constituents. With an estimated total cost of between \$67 and \$83 million dollars, this project is far too large for the City of Newport to tackle on its own. The goal here is to replace the woefully outdated Big Creek Dam, which holds Newport's municipal water supply. The current dams were originally built in 1958. Today, they have deteriorated to the point where they could completely fail in the event of an earthquake registering at 3.5 or higher. Should these dams fail, the flows would breach Highway 101 and destroy roughly 20 homes without warning. The city is currently investigating multiple money sources, including state funding and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) High Hazard Potential Dam Grant Program, but the full cost is too great to be borne solely by a local bond. Your staff have been very helpful in finding federal solutions to this problem and I hope that will continue during this process.

Failure of this dam due to an earthquake would be devastating for a variety of reasons: loss of life, impact on the local economy, and loss of critical water supply, just to name a few. Without this dam, 10,000 year-round residents and nearly 2.5 million tourists would be without water for at least a year. And the economic cost could grow to nearly \$2 billion if left unattended for 5 years.

Currently, the city has invested \$3.8 million of their limited dollars towards this project for dam design and environmental permitting. They need an additional \$5.8 to finish that work and stay on schedule for a 2025 completion target.

One final note: I have represented my portion of the Oregon coast for many years. And one of the top things my folks back home tell me is that the feds need to do a better job of staying on schedule when it comes to dredging our facilities. Unfortunately, we are often left out of the conversation when it comes to dredging. That is why I want to bring this up with the committee to use this opportunity to offer a more consistent way of providing this critical service to our

ports. Undredged ports and harbors limit economic activity and force operators to forego important upgrades to their facilities.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify about my priorities for Oregon's fifth district. And thank you again to your committee staff for working with my office on these issues. I look forward to seeing the committee's final product.