

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 21, 2016

Shaun Donovan  
Director, White House Office of Management and Budget  
Eisenhower Executive Office Building  
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Donovan:

As the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) works with federal agencies to recommend priorities for the next administration and the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Budget Request, we strongly urge you to include increased funding for the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) earthquake-related programs, including \$16.1 million for the continued development and operation of an earthquake early warning system (EEW) for the U.S. West Coast, called ShakeAlert. With increased federal investment for EEW, the United States is making tremendous progress toward having a fully operational system that will help protect lives and infrastructure. However, ***full support for ShakeAlert of \$16.1 million is needed to complete the buildout and upgrade and operate the system annually.***

As you know, EEW is proven technology that is already fully operational in countries like Japan and Mexico. The 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 and has developed an on-shore prototype system for test users along the West Coast. Researchers are also working closely with dozens of key stakeholders, including public utilities, the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system, the Los Angeles Unified School District, Boeing, Intel and Microsoft, to test and provide feedback on the system.

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 an M9 earthquake along the Pacific Northwest Coast, there is public demand for EEW to be fully operational. When earthquake events occur—and we know it is “when” and not “if”—they have the potential to be the costliest disasters the United States has ever faced. The last significant West Coast quake (Napa 6.0, 2014) resulted in \$300 million in damages.

Even with just a few seconds of warning, steps can be taken to prevent casualties and mitigate destruction, including slowing or stopping trains and cars; turning off pipelines carrying oil, natural gas, and chemicals; securing large manufacturing equipment; stopping elevators and opening doors; and securing sensitive computer data.

The effectiveness of EEW largely depends on the number and placement of ground motion 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 continues to demonstrate its commitment by

providing additional resources for ShakeAlert, including increased funding support in both the House and Senate FY 2017 Interior Appropriations bills.

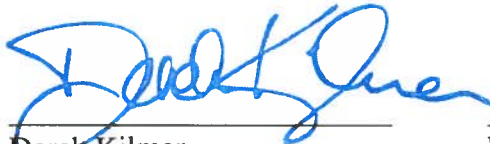
To follow through on the commitments made by the Federal Government, as well as growing funding from states and the private sector, it is critical that this program be fully funded at \$16.1 million *annually* so the West Coast will be prepared for a catastrophic earthquake. This is proven technology 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.

Sincerely,



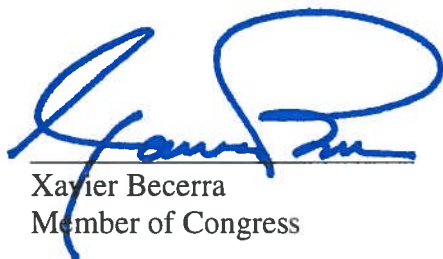
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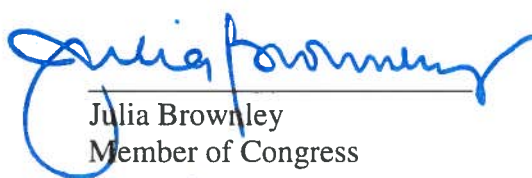
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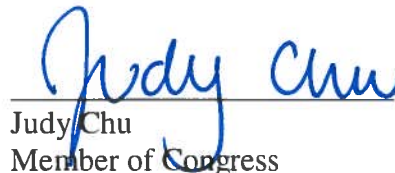
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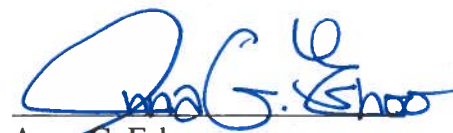
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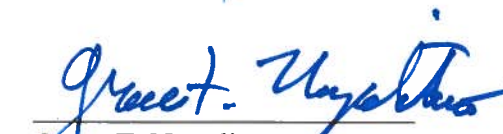
  
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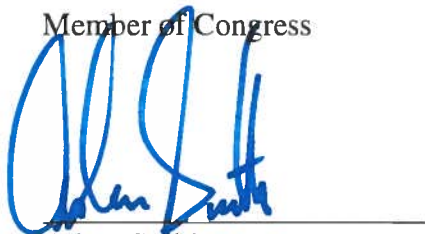
  
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Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Sally Jewell  
Secretary of the Interior

The Honorable Suzette Kimball  
Director, U.S. Geological Survey