



April 6, 2006

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
United States House of Representatives
2112 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Port of Oakland Harbor Navigation Improvement Project (-50 Foot Project)

Dear Representative Lewis:

I am writing in support of including \$50 million in funding for the Port of Oakland's Harbor Navigation Improvement Project (-50 Foot Project) in the FY 2007 Energy and Water Appropriations legislation.

As an Oakland businesswoman, I recognize the need for improvements to the Port's infrastructure and harbor. Under the direction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the -50 Foot Project is deepening the Oakland Harbor's entrance, outer and inner harbor channels and two turning basins to -50 feet. Deeper harbors are necessary to accommodate the latest generation of container vessels, which are currently on-line and capable of carrying 45% more cargo (an excess of 6500 containers). These larger ships, with their expanded capacity, help create economies of scale, translating into greater shipping efficiencies and reduced business costs.

As a community activist, I also realize the need to protect the Bay, and I applaud the Port of Oakland's beneficial re-use of 100% of dredged materials for environmental projects. Following years of planning through the Long Term Management Strategy (LTMS) process, the Bay Area has developed a plan for productive re-use of dredged materials. The Port of Oakland's work with the Hamilton Army Airfield Wetlands Restoration project is an positive example of cooperation between agencies under this plan.

I also know that it has been because of your ongoing labors that the Port has made considerable progress on, and will soon be able to complete, the -50 Foot Project. The remarkable appropriation that you made last year, \$48 million, stands as a testament to the project's tremendous success. Meanwhile, taking into consideration current federal budget constraints, the \$43.5 million generously earmarked for allocation in the President's proposed FY '07 budget, while less than requested, still represents a significant portion of the Corps funding capability for this year.

However, I am hopeful that with your leadership this amount can be increased significantly to a level further commensurate with the Corps' funding capabilities; thus, allowing this project to reach substantial completion and -50 foot drafts in both channels.

I urge you to lend your support to secure further funding for the Port of Oakland -50 Foot Project in this year's Energy and Water Appropriations legislation. Thank you for considering this request.

Respectfully,

Sandra Threlfall
Executive Director
Waterfront Action