



Hon. Doris O. Matsui

Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui

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Serving California's 5th District

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MATSUI LAUDS HOUSE PASSAGE OF ENERGY & WATER APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Washington, DC – Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-5) made the following floor statement in support of H.R. 2419, the Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, a \$29.7 billion bill to fund energy and water programs. This includes \$4.7 billion for the Army Corps of Engineers, of which over \$38 million has been designated for Sacramento flood control projects including the American River Projects, the South Sacramento County Streams and the Sacramento River Bank Protection. The funding on the projects is geared to reducing the areas that have not yet achieved the 100- year flood protection level, and ultimately exceed 200-year protection.

“I am pleased that the House approved this bill and that despite overall funding cuts for water projects, the House recognized Sacramento’s flood control needs and our city therefore saw increases in crucial flood control project funding levels,” stated Matsui. “Additionally, this bill provides the Army Corps of Engineers necessary guidance in efficiently managing projects, with an eye towards long-term planning. Just as importantly, the Corps is directed to examine its reprogramming of project dollars and specifically identify all funding owed to projects because of reprogramming.”

Included in the bill is \$38.112 million in funding for key Sacramento flood control projects, reflecting an over 60% increase above FY '05 levels:

- Sacramento River Bank Protection: \$6.3 million
- South Sacramento County Streams: \$2.852 million
- American River Projects (total): \$28.96 million
 - Common Features: \$1.11 million
 - Folsom Dam Modifications: \$15.85 million
 - Folsom Dam Mini-Raise: \$12 million

“I look forward to today’s consideration H.R. 2419, which reflects much thought and long-term planning on behalf of the Appropriations Committee. This year’s Energy and Water bill means a great deal to my constituents and to my home in Sacramento.

“Sacramento’s history has long been intertwined with flood control. When the city endured a near catastrophic flood in 1986, the community quickly realized they did not have nearly the level of flood protection necessary to fully safe-guard the region. After the city again faced more floods in 1997, the community set off to achieve 200-year flood protection. However, until that day arrives, flooding remains a very constant and real threat. And continued federal assistance plays an important role to attaining that goal.

“In spite of years of efforts, Sacramento still remains one of the most flood prone and threatened cities in the country, paling in comparison to the level of protection enjoyed by other river cities. According to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento’s flood risk is among the highest of major urban areas in the country.

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“Located at the confluence of the Sacramento and American Rivers, Sacramento is the hub of a six-county regional economy that provides 800,000 jobs for 1.5 million people. A major flood along the American River would cripple this economy, cause between \$7.0 and \$16.0 billion in direct property damages and likely result in significant loss of life. The risk of serious flooding, poses an unacceptable threat to the safety and economic well-being of Sacramento and to California’s State Capitol.

“With the steady support of Congress, Sacramento has already made good progress towards our initial goal of achieving 100-year flood protection for the region, and ultimately moving as quickly as possible towards 200-year flood protection. At the beginning of this year FEMA revised its flood maps for the majority of Sacramento to reflect 100-year flood protection. But this level of flood protection is still a far cry from the protection afforded other large river cities and at least 100,000 people and 1,500 businesses continue to be at high risk in the south Sacramento area.

“Fortunately, as a result of long bipartisan negotiations Congress has authorized a suite of projects that will achieve 200-year flood protection. Upon completion of the authorized projects to improve area levees, modify the outlets at Folsom Dam and raise Folsom Dam by seven feet, Sacramento will attain its long-term flood control goal. I deeply appreciate the Appropriations Committee’s commitment to funding these projects to help give Sacramento the level of flood protection that it both needs and deserves.

“I am also quite pleased with the work the committee has done to ensure Corps projects are executed in an efficient manner with improved financial management. For example, the work necessary to achieve 200-year flood protection will take 15 to 20 years to complete. The committee is asking that the Corp develop a five-year plan and vision for water infrastructure in the country. The current year-by-year strategy would not be an efficient manner to plan for the significant financial demands. This would ultimately compromise the ability to implement the region’s flood control projects. Efforts to comprehensively integrate financial planning and project management in the Corps will greatly benefit not only the execution of the projects, but also the local and State partner’s ability to plan their budget.

“It is certainly understandable that no matter how extensive the planning and preparation for a project, that as it moves forward it may get off schedule. With that in mind, it is certainly helpful for the Corps to be able to reprogram funding to projects that can keep progressing. But this should only happen if the Corps can return the funding back to the project the funds originally came from. To not do so, is a complete disregard of Congressional directive. In such tight financial times, the Corps must curb this practice.

“I strongly support the committee directive that the Corps specifically identify all of the funding owed to projects as a result of reprogramming. I also believe integrating this funding into the Corps Budget, will help clear the books and assist the Corps in efficient project execution and financial management.

“By working together, the Congress, the Administration and the Corps of Engineers will be better prepared to ensure limited federal resources are spent efficiently, commitments to local sponsors are honored and projects remain on schedule.

(more)



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“I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge the Committee’s work determining funding priorities for the Department of Energy. This year’s Energy and Water Appropriations bill highlights the Committee’s focus on other long-range issues – noticeably their commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. Sadly, this president’s go-it-alone approach has been ineffective in reducing the threat. By cooperating and working with our allies and others around the world to bring economic, social and political pressure to bear on any country trying to gain nuclear weapon capabilities.

“It is illogical to expect any other nation to listen to Americans speak of non-proliferation when we are developing bunker busting nuclear weapons. I stand with the Committee’s position to stop nuclear earth penetrator research. Considering the vast amount of nuclear material that is not secured in the former Soviet Union, I believe it is a much better investment to fund the Sustainable Stockpile Initiative. Through this program, we will be able increase our nation’s security by keeping their Cold War-era nuclear weapons and materials from falling into the hands of terrorist organizations.

“My one disappointment with this rule, Mr. Speaker, is that yesterday afternoon the Rules Committee refused to make in order a good amendment offered by Rep. Schwartz of Pennsylvania. Her amendment would provide the Department of Energy an additional \$250 million to accelerate energy research, development, demonstration, and deployment. This investment will help our nation harness technology to secure greater independence from foreign sources of energy. As we face rapidly rising prices for crude oil and gasoline at the pump, I believe this issue very timely and of great relevance to our debate today about the funding priorities for the Department of Energy.

This bill moves our country forward on many levels, from improving local water infrastructure to bigger-picture Corps of Engineer financial management and efficiency issues, to global issues like nuclear non-proliferation. And I strongly support the underlying bill and am pleased it was reported in a bipartisan fashion.”

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