

MONTEREY COUNTY

WATER RESOURCES AGENCY

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March 26, 2024

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for Pajaro River Flood Risk Reduction Project – FY25 Community Project Funding

Dear Representative Lofgren:

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, I write in strong support of the request for Community Project Funding in FY 2025 for the Pajaro River Flood Risk Reduction Project in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties.

As you know, this project has a history that dates to 1949, and thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, we are finally looking forward to entering the construction phase. Unfortunately, as you know, the improved levees did not come soon enough, as severe flooding in California resulted in a breach in the levee in March 2023, resulting in the evacuation of over 2,000 individuals in the Town of Pajaro, and flooding of critical farmland.

If there was ever a project that the Corps of Engineers could highlight as addressing issues of equity, the Pajaro River project is it. The City of Watsonville in Santa Cruz County and the Town of Pajaro in Monterey County each have per capita incomes that are well below the state and national averages and many of those who are the most vulnerable to flooding are working in the agriculture industry.

We hope that Congress will provide the necessary resources in FY 2025 to fund this project to completion, which we hope will accelerate the current construction timeline. It is well past the time for these residents to receive the protection they deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Glenn Church', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Glenn Church, Chair
Board of Supervisors of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency