



January 14, 2016

KATE BROWN  
Governor

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army – Civil Works  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to request that you use funds allocated by Congress to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in the FY 2016 Omnibus Appropriations bill (P.L. 114-113) for projects in Oregon that were not included in the Administration's FY 2016 budget or that were inadequately funded. The Administration budget seriously short-changed the vast majority of Oregon's ports, and jeopardizes my state's coastal economy and the safe navigability of these ports.

Oregon's 23 ports support thousands of family-wage jobs and are key to our economy and quality of life. In fact, one out of six Oregon jobs is directly or indirectly tied to cargo, recreation, industrial, commercial or other activities at Oregon's ports. These jobs contribute over \$4.5 billion in wages to the state's economy. These ports support tourism, recreation, sport and commercial fishing which are key to regional economies. They also support critical Federal agency activities such as the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Maintaining infrastructure and dredging at coastal ports are necessary for these local economies to exist and to preserve critical federal assets.

Despite the economic impact of Oregon's coastal ports, they have long been underfunded, and for the past several years most of the ports and harbors have been "zeroed out" in the Administration's budget requests to Congress. This is why Oregon's congressional delegation fought to have the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA, P.L. 113-121) include a provision which specifies that ten percent of annual Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT) revenue be used for dredging and jetty maintenance at "emerging harbors" -- several Oregon ports qualify as emerging harbors. They also fought to ensure that the USACE would have adequate resources available for O&M through the "Deep Draft Harbors and Channels" and "Small, Remote or Subsistence Navigation" accounts.

I encourage you to use a portion of these funds for O&M activities at Corps-authorized projects that are not included in the Administration's budget. The FY16 Omnibus Appropriations bill directs the USACE to give priority to O&M projects that enhance national, regional, or local economic development, promote job growth, and support the U.S. Coast Guard and other Federal agencies. Oregon's ports clearly qualify for consideration and for funding. I also request that funding be made available for the Coos Bay North Jetty and Tillamook South Jetty, both of which are in serious need of repair.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent request to save jobs in rural Oregon communities.

Sincerely,

Governor Kate Brown

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