



Senators Feinstein and Boxer Beat Back Coburn Effort to Strip Funding for California Levees and Flood Control

- Also secure additional \$13.4 million, bringing total for California levees in the Supplemental to \$37 million -

May 3, 2006

Washington, DC – U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer (both D-Calif.) today fought off an effort by Senator Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) to strip millions of dollars of federal funding to strengthen California levees and flood control from the Senate Supplemental Appropriations bill.

Senator Coburn, who had previously offered an amendment striking millions in funding for Sacramento River Bank protection, today withdrew his amendment.

“I was delighted to hear a few moments ago from Senator Coburn that he was withdrawing his amendment to delete funding from the supplemental for emergency, priority levee repairs in and around Sacramento,” Senator Feinstein said. **“This means that the bill will have \$23.3 million for the immediate repair of 29 critical erosion sites along the Sacramento River Bank identified by the State and the Army Corps of Engineers. Also in the bill is \$5.1 million for levee work on the American River, \$7.1 million for levee repairs on South Sacramento Streams, and \$1.5 million for studies to determine where repairs in the Delta can be made on a rapid basis.”**

“The bottom line is that human life and property hangs in the balance based on the sustainability of these levees. The land is below water level, sometimes as much as 20 feet below. Therefore a levee break can bring catastrophe. The State and the Federal government, as well as individual private property owners, need to move as aggressively as possible to see that levees are kept in a safe and stable condition.”

“I was so pleased when I received a call from Senator Coburn this morning saying that he was withdrawing his amendment,” Senator Boxer said. **“Senator Coburn said we ‘made some really good points.’ Well, the point is that we simply cannot take the risk of ignoring vulnerabilities in our flood control infrastructure after we have seen Katrina and the direct results of infrastructure deterioration.”**

If the bill is approved by the Senate (which is expected today), it will then go to conference where it will be reconciled with the House version of the bill. There is no California flood control funding in the House-passed bill.

Feinstein and Boxer also announced that they had secured an additional \$13.4 million in the bill. This funding is on top of the \$23.6 million provided in committee, bringing the total funding contained in the bill to \$37 million. It is considered contingent-emergency funding, meaning that it would become available only if the President requests the money and certifies that it is an emergency.

Last fall, Congress provided \$41.005 million for the highest priority levee restoration and flood control projects in fiscal year 2006. The additional funding, which was part of an amendment sponsored by Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM) providing \$2.2 billion for Army Corps of Engineers projects in New Orleans, would bring federal funding on highest flood control priorities in the Central Valley to \$78.005 million in FY 06.

Attached is a list of projects that would receive funding in the Supplemental Appropriations bill:

Following is a list the projects that the \$37 million go for:

South Sacramento Streams - \$7.1 million (up from \$6.25 million in committee)

The project in southeastern Sacramento County includes building 12 miles of floodwalls and constructing 13 miles of levee improvements. The completed project improvements will provide minimum 100-year protection to over 100,000 residents.

Sacramento River Bank Protection - \$23.3 million (up from \$11.3 million in committee)

The project in and around the City of Sacramento provides erosion control bank protection for the Sacramento River Flood Control Project levees. One hundred eighty-three actively eroding sites on levees banks have been identified, 29 of which are considered to have a high potential for failure.

American River Common Features - \$5.1 million (up from \$3.3 million in committee)

This project includes levee improvements along the lower American River and Sacramento River. When complete, these improvements will protect the 50,000 residents of Rancho Cordova in eastern Sacramento County as well as 400,000 City of Sacramento residents downstream.

Delta Islands and Levees Feasibility Study - \$1.25 million

This long term feasibility study to conduct the Delta Risk Management Strategy identifies the levees and islands in need of repairs beyond the short term authorized CalFed work.

Short-term Delta levee assessment (CALFED 180-day study) - \$250,000

This funding goes to continue coordination and initiate design data collection on projects related to the recommendations found in the Sacramento - San Joaquin Delta Report to Congress (180-day report).

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