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March 29, 2024

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: SUPPORT, FY25 Congressionally Directed Spending Request to advance annual operations / maintenance on Mare Island Ship Channel / study need for channel improvements

Dear Senator Padilla:

On behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to express our support for federal funding to advance annual operations and maintenance on the Mare Island Ship Channel (MISC), as well as studying the need for channel improvements based on updated economic development and national security needs.

As you know, Mare Island was once a bustling Navy Base and a cornerstone of Vallejo's economy. However, with the departure of the Navy and scale-back of military activities, the island struggled to maintain local businesses and residents. Recently, partnerships between public and private stakeholders have breathed new life into the island and its current residents. Development along Mare Island has steadily increased as opportunities and funding, both public and private, became available. A major asset of Mare Island is its access to navigable waters. This access has allowed the shipbuilding and repair industry to flourish, even in the absence of the military. Unfortunately, a lack of adequate operations and maintenance has caused areas of the MISC to shoal and limit development and business opportunities.

The two requests provided by the City of Vallejo would address the immediate, near-term need of maintaining the MISC to its authorized width and depth and studying the long-term viability of making improvements for increased economic development. Ensuring safe, navigable waterways is a central mission of the USACE and its Congress's responsibility to provide adequate funds to execute that USACE mission. The last time the MISC was dredged was in the early to mid-90's; therefore, the resumption of dredging requires funding for the USACE to perform initial planning and environmental activities. In order to determine if improvements are necessary on the ship channel, the USACE must conduct a cost-share feasibility study with the City of Vallejo. Funding is also needed to cover the federal share of this study.

As you develop your appropriation priorities for fiscal year 2025, we ask that you give project for the Mare Island Ship Channel full-faith consideration, understating that funding is limited and competitive. We look forward to working with you and your staff to help facilitate generational change and economic development in the City of Vallejo.

Honorable Alex Padilla

March 29, 2024

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Thank you for your support and consideration of this important community project request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitch N. Mashburn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mitch Mashburn, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

CC:

The Honorable Laphonza Butler, U.S. Senator

The Honorable John Garamendi, U.S. Representative

The Honorable Mike Thompson, U.S. Representative

The Honorable Bill Dodd, California State Senator

The Honorable Lori D. Wilson, California State Assemblymember

The Honorable Solano County Board of Supervisors

Sue Vaccaro, Director of Govt. / Comm. Relations, Mare Island Co.

Paragon Government Relations

Karen Lange, SYASL Partners