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**Subcommittee on Energy and
Water Development, and Related Agencies
FY 2020 Member Day Testimony**

Chairwoman Kaptur, Ranking Member Simpson, and members of the House Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to provide input on the FY 2020 Appropriations process on behalf of the residents of California's 39th Congressional District.

Since being sworn into office, I have met with local leaders across my district to discuss their regional priorities. In virtually every meeting, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers figured prominently. Whether it was processing development plans or design approvals, constructing infrastructure upgrades, or cleaning up Army Corps of Engineers controlled property, city leaders across my district rely on a responsive Army Corps as their partner in maintaining the quality of life for our shared constituents.

While my office is still working to best resolve the concerns raised by community leaders, it is apparent to me that the issues they raised are not the result of a lack of interest on the part of the Corps, but rather a lack of sufficient resources. I strongly encourage continued robust funding for the Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works activities, particularly for the Construction and Operation and Maintenance accounts, as this Subcommittee has championed on a bipartisan basis in the past.

In the City of Brea, we have faced unique challenges with maintaining Army Corps land in coordination with local officials. Through no fault of their own, homeless individuals establish encampments in the flood control channels above the Brea Dam. City officials have an obligation to ensure the safety of their residents but cleaning up these homeless encampments can often take months to complete. We have been assured that the Army Corps attempts to be as responsive as possible, and the city maintains good and open communication with the Army Corps. However, funding shortfalls impede timely maintenance and ongoing security. I would urge the Committee to ensure the Army Corps has the funding and flexibility to improve their ability to conduct cleanup of their property.

I would also urge the Committee to provide robust funding for the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP). CAP is a useful tool for the Army Corps to undertake localized projects. In my district, this constructive funding line will help initiate the design phase of a Project Management Plan with the Orange County Water District in the Prado Basin.

I urge you to do what you can to ensure the Corps has sufficient funds to negotiate with local partners to advance projects in a timely manner. The City of Chino Hills and its neighboring City of Chino engaged in long and complex negotiations with the Army Corps for more than a

decade to approve designs for improvements to Pine Avenue and road infrastructure in the surrounding area. While the City has indicated to me that the discussions were ultimately productive and that they enjoy a close working relationship with the Army Corps, sufficient funds are needed to ensure decade long delays like this are not replicated in other areas.

For instance, San Bernardino County will soon open negotiations with the Army Corps to replace a leasehold with an easement that the County will fund by state park bond funds. This will require complex negotiations with the Army Corps and necessitates the Corps being adequately staffed. Additionally, in the City of Fullerton, the Brea Dam has drainage tunnels and culverts and roadways that require attention due to recent storms. I encourage the Committee to provide all adequate funding for the Army Corp of Engineers Maintenance and Operations budget, which would allow the Army Corps to continue to be a good partner with our local governments.

Finally, the Santa Ana River Mainstem Project has two components currently underway that impact my district – the Prado Dam and reservoir and improvements to the Lower River in Orange County. The Santa Ana River Mainstem Project is designed for a 190-year flood event and is a cooperative effort between the Army Corps and the Counties of Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino. Full funding of the Project will allow this critical project to be completed to protect thousands of families in Southern California from major flooding.

Thank you again for your time and consideration. I know the Committee is balancing several urgent needs, and I hope that my testimony has provided you a better understanding of how important the Army Corps of Engineers and their work is to my district.