

Rep. Pete Olson | TX-22

Mr. Chairman, I'm here today to advocate for my bosses, the great people of TX-22.

The ports and waterways in the greater Houston region are not just for Texas, but all of America. They are the gateway for American Liquid Freedom exports and economic advancement for the entire country.

In order to keep our national economy strong, I request full funding from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to dredge our ports. These critical funds are needed to ensure our ports and waterways remain second to none.

Second, as y'all know, Hurricane Harvey devastated our region in 2017. Our communities were destroyed and our strength was tested, but we proved we are Houston Strong.

We're working hard with agencies like the Army Corps to make our communities more resilient and better prepared for future storms. Right now multiple studies and investigations are happening to determine the most effective storm preparation projects.

We need to get those projects completed, but we also need a strong operations and maintenance budget to make sure we are dredging the projects that ARE complete.

Lastly, the energy sector in Texas is BOOMING. We are blessed with a diverse and vibrant electrical grid. Its diversity provides reliability, that is sorely needed to avoid blackouts.

During Harvey, a coal plant in my district was knocked off line. Over the next few days, power from the South Texas Project nuclear plant kept our community online and saved countless lives from flooding by keeping the water pumps running.

Nuclear power is critical to our power grid and an important part of our energy future. We have companies working on Small Modular Reactors to build the next generation of nuclear plants. They are safe, reliable and clean, but their future is uncertain.

Ratepayers agreed to pay for nuclear power IF the federal government created a path for the spent fuel. We have a plan and we have the Yucca Mountain site. Opponents have reviewed the law around this site several times seeking a way out. Each time the result is the same – the law requires that we move forward.

We have failed to deliver on our promise for too long. Something has to give so we can get this project off the ground and follow the law WE passed. I am asking the Committee to *please* fund the Yucca Mountain project in the NRC's budget.

Thank you for your time.