

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2021

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Chairwoman
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Ranking Member
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Kaptur and Ranking member Simpson,

I appreciate the opportunity to share my priorities and concerns as representative of Washington state's 8th congressional district. I write to respectfully request consideration of the following priorities as you work to craft the Fiscal Year 2022 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

The 8th District is vast, stretching from the suburbs of Seattle in the west, over the hay fields of Kittitas County and onto the sun-drenched banks of the Columbia River in the east. Washington state is the nation's largest producer of hydroelectric power, and much of that is generated by publicly owned utilities in my district.

But water doesn't just power our cities. Water – flowing through an innovative network of reservoirs and canals – has allowed abundant orchards and grain to flourish in the dry Central Washington climate. The food grown here feeds the world and supports rural communities at home.

I respectfully ask the Committee to support programs that help my constituents make use of water in efficient, environmentally sound, and productive ways.

First, I urge the Committee to continue its support for the **Yakima Basin Integrated Plan**. The plan was developed by state, local and tribal authorities, as well as irrigators and environmental advocates. The goal is ambitious: To provide enough water for fish, farmers, and Yakima Basin communities to thrive well into the future and in the face of a changing climate.

The first phase of the plan, built on the Bureau of Reclamation's Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Program, was authorized by Congress in 2019. The state of Washington has spent \$244 million since 2013 on projects related to the Integrated Plan. The state and Yakima River Basin water users contribute, at minimum, 50% of the overall costs to implement the Plan. More federal investment is needed to balance this local commitment. We do not yet know the President's Budget Request for the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project and whether

critical priority projects are included in that request. It is my hope that this Committee will work with the President and local stakeholders to ensure these efforts are fully funded.

I also ask this Committee to support full funding for two important hydropower incentive programs within the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Water Power Technologies Office (WPTO) and established through the Energy Policy Act of 2005. **Section 242** created a hydropower production incentive program to spur new development on existing infrastructure – non-powered dams and conduits. I urge the Committee to provide \$10 million in annual appropriations for the purposes of Section 242.

Section 243 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 created a program to encourage efficiency improvements at existing hydropower facilities by providing incentive payments of up to 10 percent of the costs of a capital improvement (up to \$750,000 for a single facility). The Public Utility Districts in Washington state are constantly working to improve the productivity and efficiency of their hydro projects, and I have heard from them about how much the Section 243 program would help them do just that. However, despite being reauthorized on a bipartisan basis last year as part of the Energy Act of 2020, the Section 243 program has never received appropriations. I urge the Committee to provide \$10 million in annual appropriations for the purposes of Section 243.

I also ask your support for **the Army Corps of Engineers Section 2106 program**. This program will help maintain competitive ports in the Pacific Northwest by allowing Harbor Maintenance Tax donor ports like Seattle and Tacoma to receive a better return on the HMT revenue they generate. Section 2106 will allow shippers utilizing our ports to receive payments to help offset our HMT cost disadvantage and help them compete with Canadian harbors that directly target U.S. bound cargo. Strong domestic ports are critical to the future of agricultural exporters in my district who ship the majority of their products overseas.

Finally, I want to share my support for the Bureau of Reclamation **WaterSMART** program, which improves the water reliability for communities while increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change. Several projects in my district have made excellent use of WaterSMART funds in recent years, and I urge this Committee to continue its commitment to fully funding the program.

Thank you for your leadership during this process and for your consideration of the needs of my District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kim Schrier". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "S".

Kim Schrier, M.D.
MEMBER OF CONGRESS