

**House Energy & Water Development and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Subcommittee  
Fiscal Year 2027 Member Day  
Rep. Val Hoyle (OR-04)**

Chair Fleischmann and Ranking Member Kaptur,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy & Water. I am asking for your support to restart and finish a critical feasibility study in Springfield, Oregon.

In 1960, the Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service built the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Levee in Springfield to keep the McKenzie River from flooding the community behind it. The structure has held for decades, including during flooding in 1964 – the largest ever recorded in Lane County – when water climbed to more than 75 percent of the levee's current height. Today, the mile-long, seven-foot-tall earthen embankment helps protect homes, business, critical infrastructure and nearly 24,000 people from devastating flooding. But Springfield cannot afford to wait until the next major flood to test whether a 65-year-old levee still does its job.

In 2023, Springfield began working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) on a feasibility study to ensure the levee continues to provide flood protection for the community. Oregon's federal delegation has made it clear that this project should be a priority for the Corps. Section 202 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2020 (P.L. 116-260) directed the Corps to expedite completion of the feasibility study, and former Congressman Peter DeFazio secured \$460,00 in Community Project Funding to complete it. By December 2024, the Army Corps Northwest District confirmed that it had made significant progress on the study.

On February 12, the Corps abruptly paused the Springfield 42nd Street Levee feasibility study, informing the City that it would suspend work on all Continuing Authorities Projects nationwide at similar "logical stopping points." That decision now puts the study's next major milestone – a draft feasibility report due in August 2026 – at risk, delaying the findings Springfield needs before it can move ahead with any levee improvements.

Springfield, which is sharing the cost of the feasibility study equally with the federal government, has also not received a clear accounting from the Corps of how those funds have been spent. The Corps is required to provide the City of Springfield with monthly expenditure reports, yet the City has received none in the past year. Despite repeated requests, the Corps has not delivered the report as required. A City that is doing its part to fund this work should not be left without basic transparency from its federal partner.

Every day we wait is another day lost in a process that is already too long. We urgently need to figure out what work is needed to protect the City's residents and businesses from the catastrophic risk of levee failure. I urge the Subcommittee to include report language in the Energy & Water Appropriations Bill directing the Army Corps of Engineers to resume the Springfield 42nd Street Levee feasibility study without further delay and fulfill its financial reporting obligations to the City of Springfield.

## **REPORT LANGUAGE**

### **Springfield, Oregon — 42nd Street Levee Feasibility Study (Section 205 CAP)**

***Springfield 42nd Street Levee Feasibility Study.*** The Committee is aware that the Army Corps of Engineers paused the Springfield, Oregon 42nd Street Levee feasibility study in February 2026, citing a nationwide pause of Continuing Authorities Program projects at logical stopping points. The Committee notes that the Springfield project achieved a significant in-progress review milestone in December 2024. The Committee directs the Army Corps of Engineers to resume the Springfield 42nd Street Levee feasibility study no later than 30 days after enactment of this Act and to submit a revised project schedule to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 30 days of resumption.

***Financial Reporting.*** The Committee is concerned that the Army Corps of Engineers has failed to provide the City of Springfield with required monthly expenditure reports for a period of no less than 12 months, leaving the City without visibility into expenditures. The Committee directs the Army Corps to provide the City of Springfield with a comprehensive accounting of all project expenditures to date within 30 days of enactment of this Act, and to resume monthly financial reporting in compliance with cost-share agreement requirements.