

June 30, 2009

The Honorable Rick Larsen, United States House of Representatives
2930 Wetmore Ave, Suite 9F
Everett, WA 98201

RE: FEMA Review (CLOMR) of the Mount Vernon Downtown Flood Protection Project

Dear Representative Larsen:

Having just received a letter from FEMA Headquarters in response to the City of Mount Vernon's recent submittal and request to FEMA for a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) (see attached letter dated June 23, 2009), I am extremely concerned. As Mayor of Mount Vernon, the determination from FEMA came as quite a surprise to say the very least. FEMA has refused to perform the technical CLOMR review. Instead, FEMA has determined to delay a decision until the Corps of Engineers General Investigative Study is completed.

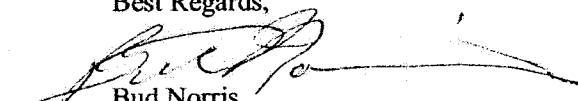
Mount Vernon is a small community that has worked diligently on a project that will protect its downtown core from the annual threat of flooding and allow for our historic downtown to redevelop and revitalize as an urban center. For the past 5 years the City has gone through an exhaustive public process evaluating the environmental impacts and coordinating with local, state and federal agencies. Mount Vernon has spent millions of dollars on technical and scientific studies and on the acquisition of properties to accommodate the flood protection project. The project is fully permitted, in final design and with the necessary funding can be scheduled for construction within eight months.

The City and its engineers have worked with FEMA for the past several years and more recently within the past 12 months, to insure that the City is following the appropriate steps and process in order to design a flood protection project that can remove downtown Mount Vernon from the 100-year flood plain. FEMA's refusal to take action places Mount Vernon in harm's way for the next flood. Considering the amount of time and effort that the City has put forth in concert with FEMA, **FEMA's position is outrageous and insulting.**

On behalf of the City of Mount Vernon I am asking each of you to personally request FEMA to give the City due process and consideration by conducting a comprehensive technical evaluation and to make a decision based on the merits of the Project. FEMA's refusal to continue to process the City's application is an abuse by a federal agency, one which we have worked diligently with and have relied on for their support and guidance throughout our design process.

Representative Larsen, thank you for your attention to this critical matter and I am as always, available to meet with you personally or by phone to further discuss this issue.

Best Regards,



Bud Norris
Mayor

Cc: Honorable Patty Murray, United States Senate
Honorable Maria Cantwell, United States Senate