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November 1, 2021

Lieutenant General Scott A. Spellmon  
Chief of Engineers and Commanding General  
United States Army Corps of Engineers  
441 G Street NW  
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Dear Lieutenant General Spellmon:

I ask that the United State Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) engage immediately with the relevant local, state, and federal authorities in California to alleviate the current noxious odor situation in Carson, California – and to begin work on a remediation and restoration plan for the Dominguez Channel to promote the long-term health and well-being of the Channel and local residents. I would also like to request a meeting, at your earliest convenience, to better understand the USACE’s jurisdiction and obligations related to the Channel and to discuss the remediation and restoration of the Channel.

For almost a month, residents of Carson, and surrounding communities, have been severely impacted by an intense, foul odor, and the associated health impacts caused by exposure to elevated hydrogen sulfide levels. The noxious odor is emanating from the Dominguez Channel in Carson, California, which is located within my Congressional District.

Currently, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works and the Los Angeles County Fire Department, Health Hazardous Materials Division are working in tandem to alleviate the noxious odor. However, the Dominguez Channel will be susceptible to a repeat event without significant investment in dredging the channel and removing sediment to reestablish a healthy estuary. While I understand multiple agencies have authority over various portions of the Dominguez Channel, I urge the USACE to be proactively involved in the vital actions required to maintain and enhance the parts of the channel which are within their jurisdiction.

I also respectfully request the USACE to provide the maximum assistance to all local, state, and federal agencies involved in the current efforts to eliminate the noxious odor and the remediation and restoration efforts in the Dominguez Channel. Multijurisdictional partnerships are essential to the planning and execution of a project at this scale. This is an issue of health and environmental justice, which is impacting over 100,000 residents. The opportunity to correct these injustices and prevent further harm to my constituents requires immediate action.

I look forward to your response to addressing this urgent issue and ask you to please keep my office informed of the progress toward remediation and restoration of the Dominguez Channel.

Sincerely,

*Nanette Diaz Barragán*

Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress

Cc: Dr. Christine Altendorf, Chief of Engineering and Construction, United States Army Corps of Engineers