

Representative Jim Costa
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Member's Day Hearing
April 18, 2023

Good afternoon, thank you Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member for holding this Member Day Hearing. It is critical we continue to work in a bipartisan fashion towards addressing our nation's infrastructure needs. I look forward to working with the committee and colleagues on shared goals such as: improving our supply chains, enhancing our nation's water infrastructure, and sustainable rail and aviation service.

Supply Chains

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven time and time again that it is critical we continue to ensure our supply chains are protected. As I have always said, food security is national security, and when our food supply chain is threatened, we must act. I was thankful to work in a bipartisan fashion with Mr. Johnson and Mr. Garamendi on *Ocean Shipping Reform Act* last Congress, and will continue to on *Ocean Shipping Reform Act 2.0*, *Ocean Shipping Antitrust Enforcement Act*, and *SHIP IT Act* this Congress.

The *Ocean Shipping Reform Act* must be implemented to the fullest extent possible. The technical additions from *Ocean Shipping Reform Act 2.0* must be passed this year in addition to the *Ocean Shipping Antitrust Enforcement Act*. These bills are critical towards ensuring foreign ocean carriers are being held accountable for unfair trade practices. The Federal Maritime Commission must be empowered to protect fair trade and American business from foreign adversaries.

Additionally, the *SHIP IT Act* is a must-pass bill this Congress as it also addresses a key part of our supply chain – our trucking industry. Our nation needs a solution to ensure a stable, reliable trucking workforce. The *SHIP IT Act* modernizes the system by enhancing the recruitment and retainment of our trucking workforce by: modernizing the authority for certain vehicle waivers during emergencies, allowing waivers in response to disease and supply chain emergencies; streamlines the

Commercial Driver's License process, and incentivizes new truck drivers to enter the workforce through targeted and temporary tax credits.

I urge the committee to hold hearings and markups on the above bills to ensure a successful, and sustainable supply chain movement for our nation.

Water Infrastructure

As you work with the Corps to implement the *Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2022*, please keep in mind a feasibility study for modifications to the Redbank and Fancher Creeks project. Modifying the project will have the potential to increase groundwater recharge by thirty thousand acre-feet during wet years like this one. Recharging our depleted groundwater aquifers is badly needed in regions like the San Joaquin Valley, and it is critical that we reevaluate operations to maximize the potential and efficiency of existing infrastructure we already have.

Looking ahead to the next Water Resources Development Act, I urge the Committee to work with the Corps to prioritize efforts to increase groundwater recharge in drought-prone areas like my district. I also recently learned from state officials that the south San Joaquin Valley does not have a regional flood plan. This needs to be rectified, and I urge you to work with the Army Corps to coordinate with state and local officials as necessary on these efforts.

Another priority for the Army Corps in my district this year is preparing for and responding to the floods we are going to have when California's enormous snowpack melts in the coming months. We need to be prepared, and we need to restore our infrastructure to be more resilient to future wet year floods, and be better prepared to capture that floodwater using recharge or other storage methods.

I urge the committee to work with members to update the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program. I am preparing to reintroduce my bipartisan bill to clarify that non-federal entities who manage federally owned infrastructure are in fact qualified applicants. WIFIA could be a critical tool for financing repairs to the Jones Pumping Plant that is critical for supplying water to tens of millions of people and millions of acres of farmland in southern California and the Central Valley. Not having a working Jones pumping plan would be akin to deadline of Lake Mead on the Colorado River.

Sustainable Rail Service

Rail safety and service are critical as we continue to ensure a safe, reliable system for the movement of our people and goods. The Federal-State Partnership is a critical program that must fund projects that are construction ready and produce high speed rail, such as the California High-Speed Rail project. However, it is critical our passenger and freight rail are both addressed. As legislation is considered on safety, it is imperative the committee consider addressing common carrier agreements. Our nation must have both a *safe* and *reliable* rail system for the movement of goods and people.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization

As the committee considers the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization this year, it is critical airports that provide regional, domestic, and international service for rural towns are prioritized. The Fresno Yosemite International Airport is a critical airport for the State of California and for the nation as it plays a role in connecting people all over the world to California's crown jewel, Yosemite National Park. As the committee considers Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization, I urge the committee to continue to prioritize airport improvement project funding as it plays a critical role in connecting our nation.