

Legislation Text

File #: 2010-0104, **Version:** 2

A MOTION requesting the United States Congress appropriate sufficient funds to provide for the interim and permanent repairs to the Howard Hanson dam, and direct the Army Corps of Engineers to make the Howard Hanson dam permanent repair a priority project.

WHEREAS, the federally owned and operated Howard Hanson dam has provided flood protection for residents and businesses of the Green River valley in Washington State since 1961, and

WHEREAS, the Howard Hanson dam has prevented potential flood damages amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars over the last four decades, and

WHEREAS, the Green River valley contains the second largest warehouse and product distribution center on the West Coast, and

WHEREAS, the Green River Valley Industrial Center represents thirty seven billion and three hundred and sixty million dollars in gross business income, four thousand five hundred businesses and over one hundred thousand jobs, and

WHEREAS, the population of the Green River valley watershed is estimated at three hundred and fifty thousand residents, including many low-income families, and

WHEREAS, in January 2009, following a record high level storage of floodwater, the Army Corps of Engineers discovered damage to the right abutment of the Howard Hanson dam, which led to restrictions on the operating capacity of the dam and increased the flood risk to the Green River valley, and

WHEREAS, in the event of a flood, residents and businesses of the Green River valley could be displaced for weeks, months or permanently, and

WHEREAS, flood damage will cost individual citizens and businesses without insurance thousands of dollars for repairs and relocation and severely impact an economic engine for the entire state, and

WHEREAS, the looming threat of a potential flood has caused some businesses to relocate from the Green River valley with a negative impact on economic development, and

WHEREAS, since the damages were found, federal, state and local governments have worked together to provide interim measures of flood protection until a permanent fix to the dam is completed, and

WHEREAS, permanent repairs to the Howard Hanson dam have been estimated to take as long as six years, and

WHEREAS, the United States Army Corps of Engineers has identified an interim solution that would extend the grout curtain over a deeper and wider area of the right abutment of the Howard Hanson dam that would allow for the storage of water at higher levels, and

WHEREAS, this interim solution, while not a permanent solution, would reduce the flood risk threat levels to the same level that existed prior to damage to the dam, and

WHEREAS, the estimate for the interim solution is forty-four million dollars, and is a modest investment compared to the three billion seven hundred million dollars that Federal Emergency Management Agency estimates could result from just a single flood from damage at the Howard Hanson dam;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The King County council requests the federal government and United States Congress provide for an immediate appropriation of forty-four million dollars for interim grout work and related repairs to the Howard Hanson dam so that this work can be completed before the next flood season.

B. The King County council requests the United States Congress appropriate sufficient funds to provide for permanent repair to the Howard Hanson dam, and direct the Army Corps of Engineers to make the Howard Hanson dam permanent repair a priority project and expedite their standard processes to assure the fastest and safest approach.

C. Copies of the adopted motion shall be transmitted by the clerk of the council to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, each member of Congress from the state of Washington and the Secretary of Defense.