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January 22, 2026

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
500 C Street, SW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20472

The Honorable Karen Evans
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Secretary Noem and Administrator Evans,

I am writing to follow up on my letter from April 16, 2025, regarding FEMA's decision to terminate the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. The termination of BRIC funding is actively suppressing economic growth in communities I represent, preventing federal tax revenue, and severely restricting development in Washington's 6th District. Specifically, the Aberdeen-Hoquiam Flood Protection Project which would build two levees and a pump station for communities that face routine flooding. The cancellation of this \$87 million grant has had widespread economic repercussions.

In the cities of Aberdeen and Hoquiam, more than 5,100 properties and over 1,000 existing businesses¹ are trapped in the floodplain—all of which would've been protected by the BRIC-funded levee project. As a result, residents and employers collectively pay over \$2 million each year in flood insurance premiums, which means thousands of dollars a year in added costs for homeowners². That means these dollars can't be used for local commerce, business expansion, and job creation. Releasing the frozen grant funds so these levees can be built would immediately redirect that spending back into the economy.

The lack of necessary flood protection has also made development prohibitively expensive and, in many cases, impossible. Aberdeen and Hoquiam rely on infill development, or building within vacant lots due to limited land space, yet flood-zone construction requires first-floor elevations

¹ Senate Capital Budget Includes \$18.5M for the Aberdeen-Hoquiam Flood Protection Project. (2023, March 23). Retrieved January 8, 2026, from https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1997/Documents/Documents/Press%20Release.Aberdeen%20%20Hoquiam%20Flood%20Protection%20Project.Senate%20Capital%20Budget%20Announced.March%2023%202023.Final.pdf.

² Tavernise, S. (2025, June 9). Trump's cuts imperils funding for a levee project in Washington - The New York Times. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/09/us/trump-cuts-washington-levees.html>.

of three to seven feet above the flood-zone. The resulting cost increases routinely kill projects before they even begin.

Critically, most other federal financing tools can't be used in the floodplain – contributing to lost federal leverage and economic activity. For example, \$15 million for a commercial project in Hoquiam fell through, despite an executed purchase and sale agreement, because HUD financing could not be applied to a flood-zone site. That project would have generated jobs, local economic activity, and ongoing federal tax revenue for the communities I represent.

The levee project itself would be a direct generator of federal revenue. With approximately \$160 million in construction activity, it is projected to produce at least \$14 million in state and federal sales tax revenue alone, while supporting hundreds of construction jobs over a two-year period. Delaying or cancelling this project does not reduce federal spending in a meaningful way, it eliminates long-term economic growth.

To be clear: the cancellation of BRIC is not promoting government efficiency by any measure or definition. By halting preventative infrastructure, FEMA is increasing long-term disaster response costs while simultaneously reducing the tax base needed to fund them. By 2050, it is estimated that \$500 million in home value will be at risk between Aberdeen and Hoquiam because of flooding³. This destruction is preventable with the right infrastructure and funding.

The Aberdeen-Hoquiam Flood Protection Project is a clear example of how strategic infrastructure investment reduces federal liabilities and expands federal revenue. Continuing to block this project places rural communities in economic stasis and deprives the federal government of returns it would otherwise realize.

Given these impacts, I urge FEMA to immediately unfreeze funding for the Aberdeen-Hoquiam Flood Protection Project, particularly in light of other BRIC grant projects being unfrozen.

Additionally, I again request a meeting to discuss how FEMA intends to prevent further economic harm in Washington's 6th District. I look forward to your prompt response.

In service of the hardworking people of Washington's 6th district,



Congresswoman Emily Randall
Washington's 6th District

³ Weinberger, H. (2023, January 17). Battered by destructive floods, Grays Harbor bets on a \$182m levee. Cascade PBS. <https://www.cascadepbs.org/investigations/2023/01/battered-destructive-floods-grays-harbor-bets-182m-levee/>.