

Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey,

My name is Spencer Nebel, and I am the City Manager for the City of Newport. I'm here today to request your consideration of \$14 million for the Big Creek Dams Replacement Project.

First, I want to thank you for authorizing our project for \$4 million in the 2019 session and for including that authorization in Section 15 of Senate Bill 5534.

Ten years ago, city engineers discovered real threats to our City's sole source of water which is stored behind the Upper and Lower Big Creek Dams. They found that the foundation material that the Big Creek Dams were built on is unstable and could fail in the event of a moderate earthquake.

To make matters more urgent, the State recently discovered advanced seepage issues in the upper dam and downgraded the safety rating to "unsafe" due to the risk of catastrophic failure.

Newport has applied for several state and federal grants, and invested nearly \$6 million of our own money, but we lost our \$4 million lottery bond allocation that was passed by the legislature in 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding continues to be a challenge.

I want to thank Representative David Gomberg for his advocacy for our project and for submitting the request for \$14 million, not only for design and permitting but also for the construction of our replacement dam. The total project cost is estimated between \$70-80 million dollars, which our small city cannot afford on our own. State assistance would go a long way to increase the pace of the dam replacement project and help the City mitigate the imminent safety risk to our community.

We thank Senator Anderson and Representative Gomberg for their interest and support of our project. On behalf of the City of Newport, I respectfully ask for your consideration of our request for \$14 million in lottery bonding in SB 5534. This \$14 million request includes the \$4 million in section 15 of the bill that was previously authorized to allow the City to move forward with dam design and environmental permitting on the timeline directed by the state in order to secure the City's only water supply and reduce the risk to residents who live within the inundation zone.

Thank you for your consideration of our request this afternoon.

Spencer Nebel, City Manager