

Rep. Ellen Tauscher Secures an Additional \$11.2 Million for Bay Area Port Security

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Bay Area Ports Identified as Critical National Infrastructure upon Tauscher's Insistence

Washington, DC – Today the Department of Homeland Security announced that it will dramatically increase the amount of funding for grants to improve port security in the Bay Area – an issue Rep. Ellen Tauscher has been pushing for months. The ports will now receive \$11,201,793 – 10 times the anemic \$1,185,716 for Bay Area port security grants in the 2006 budget.

Funding was increased based on the Department of Homeland Security's decision to change the designation of the Bay Area ports – including the Ports of Oakland, Richmond, San Francisco, and Stockton – as a "Tier One Port Region." Tier One ports are identified based on risk as well as the effectiveness of proposed investment by the applicants. Risk to port areas is assessed using a methodology consisting of threat, vulnerability, and consequence factors.

In September of last year Rep. Tauscher wrote to Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff expressing concern that the Bay Area, specifically the Port of Oakland, was not categorized as a Tier One Port despite being the fourth busiest container port in the nation and the Pacific Coast gateway to the Asian markets.

“In a world where we need to stay one step ahead of the threats to our national security, we can no longer afford to plan against the last attack,” Rep. Tauscher said today. “We have vital infrastructure and commerce in the Bay Area, and we have to be smart about how we protect it. I’m glad the Department of Homeland Security is finally starting to catch up. We must secure vulnerable infrastructure across-the-board to plan and secure against new strikes against commerce and industry. Designating the Bay Area as a Tier One region is a huge step in the right direction.”

The funding was secured through the DHS Infrastructure Protection Program (IPP), a program designed to strengthen the nation’s ability to protect critical infrastructure facilities and structures. The funds will primarily go toward assisting ports in enhancing risk management capabilities, improving domain awareness, providing capabilities to prevent, detect, respond to and recover from attacks involving improvised explosive devices and other non-conventional weapons, as well as additional training and exercises of port personnel.

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