



February 10, 2023

The Honorable Randy Weber
303 East Main Street
Suite 250
League City, TX 77573

Re: Support for Brazos River Floodgates Project

Dear Congressman Weber:

The Greater Houston Port Bureau supports full capability funding (\$260 million) of the Brazos River Floodgates Project in FY24. The Port Bureau represents over 250 companies in the greater Houston port complex, including public and private terminals; public and private ports; pilots' associations; vessel operators; local, state, and federal government agencies; universities; and other stakeholders. Each of these companies rely on safe, efficient navigation of the regional waterways to support the movement of globally crucial commodities.

The Brazos River Floodgates (BRFG) are a critical component to our region's maritime infrastructure, with \$117 billion of cargo passing through the floodgates every year. However, the floodgates were built in the 1940s, and are now severely outdated, frequently damaged, and too small for modern boats and barges. They require frequent hazard mitigation measures which cause delays, increased emissions, and higher costs for shippers.

- These floodgates are struck more often than any other Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) navigation project in the nation.
- Delays to navigation in 2020:
 - 11,472 transits through East and West gates averaged 12.38 hours delay.
 - \$49,708,176 in approximate downtime cost for delays (does not include costs for lost loads and variable costs e.g., potential product spoilage).
- The floodgates are significant because they pass approximately 30 million tons of barged material each year, including food and farm products, autos, petroleum and petroleum products, manufactured goods, equipment and machinery and more.
- The Brazos River Floodgates Project has a benefit to cost ratio in excess of 5 to 1, making it highly beneficial for the region and nation.
- It is also the only project in the nation that can use the excess revenues in the Inland Waterway Trust Fund (IWTF) for FY24. This project could be funded to its full capability in FY24 (\$260 million) along with every other eligible project and still leave \$192 million in the IWTF.

Furthermore, based on the other queued ACOE projects, if the Brazos River Floodgates project is not funded in FY24, it would push the project back another 10 years. This is an unacceptable delay to the improvements needed for the safety and economic viability of industry using the Brazos River Floodgates.

We appreciate your consideration of this project. To continue the dialog with industry leaders on this important issue, please contact CAPT Bill Diehl (USCG), Ret., P.E. at (713) 678-4300 or bdiehl@txgulf.org.

Sincerely,



Bernt Netland
Chairman, Greater Houston Port Bureau

CC: Senator John Cornyn
Senator Ted Cruz
Representative Shelia Jackson Lee
Representative Brian Babin
Representative Dan Crenshaw
Representative Lizzie Fletcher
Representative Sylvia Garcia
Representative Al Green
Representative Morgan Luttrell
Representative Michael McCaul
Representative Troy Nehls
Representative Wesley Hunt
Representative Michael Cloud
Representative Vicente Gonzalez
Representative Kay Granger
Representative John Carter
Representative Henry Cuellar
Representative Tony Gonzales
Representative Jake Ellzey