

U.S. Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson Has Gathered Key Congressional Support for Geocell's Rapid Deployment Flood Wall in the Fiscal Year 2003 Federal Budget Process

JO ANN EMERSON
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April 18, 2002

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The Honorable Sonny Callahan
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy & Water Development
2362 Rayburn Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy & Water Development
2313 Rayburn Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman  and Ranking Member  Visclosky:

As you prepare the Energy and Water Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2003, we are writing to request that you include available funding for the purchase of the Rapid Deployment Flood Wall (RDFW). At least two Corps Districts have requested this material to date, and they are anxious to have this product available in the event of a flood. Providing the Corps with funds specifically targeted for the purchase of RDFW will make this product more accessible to those in the field who must respond to emergency flood situations.

Each year, our nation spends billions of dollars in emergency flood relief operations, relying heavily on sandbags as the primary means of immediate flood protection. Unfortunately, sandbag technology is outdated. As commercial and residential development continues to grow along our nation's waterways and coastal areas, and with another El Nino expected in 2002-2003, our continued dependence on sandbag technology is putting our communities at ever increasing risk. As Representatives of Congressional Districts with areas prone to flooding, we are particularly concerned about the ability of sandbag technology to provide reliable and timely flood protection for our constituents in emergency situations.

The Rapid Deployment Flood Wall (RDFW) is an innovative new flood-fighting technology that is specifically designed to replace or augment sandbags during flood emergencies. RDFW is an expandable, stackable, modular wall made out of a tough, lightweight, environmentally responsible plastic that can be filled with sand and other locally available fill material for use as a flood protection wall. RDFW is a dramatic improvement in flood fighting technology that is cost-effective, requires less manpower, provides higher levels of flood protection, and can be deployed much faster than protective sandbag walls.

RDFW is the result of a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement between Geocell Systems Inc. and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps' Engineering Research and Development Center in Vicksburg, Mississippi conducted extensive analysis which resulted

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in successful testing of Geocell's RDFW. This technology has the potential to save the federal government billions of dollars annually in flood-fighting and cleanup costs as well as saving billions more by providing superior protection for property and most importantly, lives.

It is our hope that you will provide the necessary support for this innovative new flood protection project that will end our nation's reliance on 100-year old sandbagging technology. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Jo Ann Emerson
John T. Doolittle
Sam Graves
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Bill Jenkins
Anna Eshoo
Robert J. Matsui

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