

Members of the U.S. Congress Continue to Demonstrate Their Support for the Rapid Deployment Flood Wall

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0401

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The Honorable David Hobson
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy and Water Development
2362 Rayburn HOB
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The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy and Water Development
2313 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hobson and Ranking Member Visclosky:

As you prepare Energy and Water Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2004, I write to request that you include \$10 million in funding to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for the purchase of the Rapid Deployment Flood Wall (RDFW). Purchase of this technology is authorized under PL 84-99, and I request funding through the USACE's *Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies (FC&EC)* program account.

Each year, the federal government 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 Unfortunately, sandbag technology is outdated and costly. There is a better way.

The 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.

The RDFW has received widespread support from USACE officials throughout the country. It was developed through a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement between Geocell Systems Inc. and the USACE. The Corps' Engineering Research and Development Center in Vicksburg, Mississippi, conducted an extensive analysis which resulted in successful testing of Geocell's RDFW. It has been demonstrated before USACE districts in some of the nation's most flood-prone states including Arkansas, California, Kentucky, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee, Oregon, and Virginia. The Little Rock and Nashville districts both have purchased the RDFW, and districts in numerous other states continue to express an interest in purchasing the technology. Unfortunately, these districts lack the funds to purchase the RDFW.

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The RDFW 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. I urge you to provide congressional appropriations to allow USACE districts to begin stockpiling the RDFW. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


MARION BERRY
Member of Congress



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