

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 3, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
437 Russell Senate Bldg  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
304 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
531 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chairman Merkley, and Ranking Member Murkowski,

As members of the Washington state delegation, we urge you to support the fiscal year 2023 funding level of \$54 million for the Puget Sound Geographic Program that passed in H.R. 8294 earlier this year. This funding provides critical grant support to state, local, and tribal governments to implement projects that improve water quality, protect shorelines, and enhance fish passage and salmon habitat.

Puget Sound is the nation's largest estuary by volume and is vital to Washington state's identity and economy. The health of the Sound is integral to the environmental and economic future of our region. It supports some of our most culturally important species – salmon, orca, and Dungeness crab. Washington state generates roughly \$26.1 billion annually in economic impact through jobs in the fishing, shellfish harvesting, and maritime industries. Additionally, there are 19 federally recognized tribes that have made Puget Sound their home since time immemorial, including 17 with tribal treaty rights to harvest fish and shellfish.

But despite our years-long effort to protect and restore the Sound, we still have a lot of work to do to address the significant challenges that continue to threaten this crown jewel of our region, including stormwater runoff, habitat loss and harmful algal blooms. Maintaining the funding level passed in the House is vital if we're going to recover our salmon populations, fulfill our tribal treaty rights, and ensure future generations can build their livelihoods in our region. We need the federal government to support the work already being done by the state, tribes, local communities, and businesses that all depend on a vibrant and healthy Sound.

Thank you for the consideration of this request, and we thank you for the committee's longstanding support of the Puget Sound Geographic Program.

Sincerely,

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515



Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene  
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Adam Smith  
Member of Congress