



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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NEWS RELEASE



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SEN. PADILLA, REPS. LOFGREN, PANETTA TO VISIT PAJARO LEVEE

On Wednesday, April 12, U.S. Senator Alex Padilla and U.S. Representatives Zoe Lofgren and Jimmy Panetta will hold a press conference to discuss federal efforts to reduce flood risk for the historically underserved communities of Watsonville and Pajaro.

The visit follows extreme weather events in California that caused devastating flooding and breached the Pajaro River levee, displacing hundreds of families. Most recently, Senator Padilla, along with Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Reps. Lofgren and Panetta, sent a letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers urging them to accelerate construction of the federally authorized project to reduce flood risks faced by surrounding urban and agricultural areas, and to provide emergency repairs and response for the towns of Pajaro and Watsonville. Last month, Padilla pressed Director of the Office of Management and Budget Shalanda Young to ensure adequate resources go to historically overlooked and low-income communities like Pajaro, which disproportionately bear the impacts of natural disasters due to lack of adequate protections.

Padilla, Feinstein, and Panetta secured \$149 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law with Lofgren's support to address the urgent flood risks along the Pajaro River, including the modernization of the 74-year-old levee system that breached before improvements could be made. The visit also comes as Padilla and Lofgren successfully led the California Congressional delegation in urging the Biden Administration to approve a Major Disaster Declaration for the most recent severe winter storms and atmospheric river systems.

WHEN: Wednesday, April 12, 2 p.m.

WHO: U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla, U.S. Representative Jimmy Panetta, U.S. Representative Zoe Lofgren, Dr. Mark Strudley, Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency

WHERE: Watsonville, CA. Near Highway 1

RSVP: *This event is opened to credentialed members of the media only. Reporters interested in covering the press conference must [RSVP HERE](#) for additional information and exact location.*