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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

August 21, 1996

Administrative Records Center
New Bedford
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National Remedy Review Board
United States Environmental Protection Agency
MC-5204G
401 M Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed Record of Decision (ROD) for the next phase of the New Bedford Harbor Superfund Cleanup. As you know, the officials at the EPA Region I office believe this plan will allow necessary environmental clean up to complement critical economic development in a cost effective manner.

At present, EPA's proposed site remediation plan for the Harbor is to dredge only those sediments with PCBs in excess of 50 ppm. Under this plan, the sediment to be dredged in the Harbor would not include any of the sediment necessary for navigational maintenance dredging which the Harbor also needs. However, this maintenance dredge area is actually physically located within the boundaries of the New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site. For a host of policy and financial reasons, I believe that we should take advantage of this correspondence between the area requiring maintenance dredging, which contains lower levels of contamination, and the area requiring remedial action by integrating the maintenance dredging into the New Bedford Harbor remedial action. Fortunately, this course of action is allowed under the "Enhancement Remedy" provisions of 40 CFR 300.515(f) of the National Contingency Plan (NCP).

From the environmental standpoint, including the maintenance dredging area as a part of the remedial action will result in the cleanup of significant, additional amounts of contaminated sediments sooner than would otherwise be possible. This expanded scope of remediation, which would remove additional hazardous sediment and reduce potential exposure to the contaminants, would clearly "enhance" the environmental and public health benefits resulting from the remedy. Moreover, the maintenance dredging will work in concert with the City's own plans for developing New Bedford Harbor for public and economic uses, thereby mitigating some of the financial burden associated with the remedy. In addition, the City's own interest in maintenance dredging will help expedite the process of identifying and agreeing upon potential disposal sites for dredged materials with lower levels of contamination and solutions to other issues associated with the disposal of the dredged sediment.

This project is extremely important, and I hope it will receive your approval.

Barney Frank

BARNEY FRANK

attn: Bruce Means

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