

PRESS RELEASE

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**Assemblymember David Chiu, Mayor Mark Farrell, the
Port of San Francisco and City Leaders Announce Bill to
Fund Embarcadero Seawall Improvements**

*Legislation would generate \$250 million to strengthen San Francisco waterfront to protect
against seismic events and flooding*

SAN FRANCISCO—Assemblymember David Chiu (D-San Francisco), Mayor Mark Farrell, State Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) and other San Francisco leaders today announced new state legislation to finance crucial improvements to the Embarcadero Seawall along three miles of San Francisco waterfront, from Fisherman’s Wharf to Mission Creek. Assembly Bill 2578 would give the state a mechanism to contribute to the Seawall Earthquake Safety Program and would generate an estimate of \$55 million in the first ten years of the program and an estimate of \$250 million over the lifetime of the program.

AB 2578 will allow the city to direct the school’s share of tax increment to the Port’s infrastructure financing district (IFD) and authorize the use of that funding for shoreline improvements. San Francisco received the ability to form IFDs along the Port through previous state legislation.

“Sea level rise and earthquakes are real threats to San Francisco’s waterfront,” said Assemblymember Chiu. “Strengthening the Embarcadero Seawall will safeguard us against potential flooding that threatens the future of our city and region. While the federal government only talks about infrastructure, the State of California can be a partner as we work together to rebuild this crucial asset.”

“In the face of baffling federal inaction on climate change, we are taking the initiative at the state and local level to protect our residents,” said Mayor Farrell. “The San Francisco seawall is our last defense against the rising sea levels brought on by climate change, and if we do not act now, our city will feel the impact for generations to come. I commend Assemblymember Chiu and are our State delegation for leading efforts to make these crucial infrastructure investments. We are working together to ensure the San Francisco remains a strong, resilient City.”

“Our seawall is disintegrating, which is a danger for our city’s safety and economy, especially as sea levels rise due to climate change,” said Senator Wiener (D-San Francisco). “Restoring and strengthening San Francisco’s seawall is going to take partnership from local, state, and federal leaders, and I’m proud to be joining Assemblymember Chiu to move this bill forward to help protect our waterfront.”

“Right now our waterfront and downtown San Francisco could face devastating flooding if the Embarcadero Seawall fails during a major earthquake, which we know is coming,” said Board of Supervisors President London Breed, who is also a member of the Capital Planning Committee. “We have to be ready for an earthquake and for sea level rise. We have to ask the State to join us by investing in the seawall to protect people’s lives and the economic vitality of our city. I appreciate the partnership with Assemblymember Chiu and the entire State delegation on this crucial effort.”

“By making these prudent investments now, we will both strengthen the seawall shield so it can protect us when disaster strikes, and we will reinforce the unbreakable bond between the city of San Francisco and the beautiful waterfront we all love,” said Supervisor Jane Kim.

“The State of California built the Embarcadero Seawall starting in 1879 and this effort defined the public shoreline and allowed the City to grow and thrive. This investment has returned value to the State for over 100 years and now it is time to invest in this critical infrastructure again,” said Elaine Forbes, Executive Director of the Port of San Francisco. “Assembly Bill 2578 will help us strengthen the Seawall to make our waterfront safer for the over 24 million people that visit it each year now, and for future generations.”

Construction of the Embarcadero Seawall began in 1879 on unstable soil and before advancements in engineering enabled infrastructure projects to survive major seismic events. It is over 100 years old, is San Francisco’s oldest infrastructure, and has settled and cracked. Combined with the threat of rising sea levels as a result of climate change and an inevitable major earthquake, the Seawall’s vulnerability makes the city’s northeastern waterfront particularly susceptible to disastrous earthquake damage and flooding.

The Seawall protects the Bay Area’s major rail and ferry transportation systems carrying nearly 500,000 passengers per day and supports \$100 billion of assets and economic activity along the city’s northeastern waterfront, making it a crucial resource for the entire region. In the event of an emergency, the Embarcadero will be a critical area to transport people and supplies in and out of the City.

The Port of San Francisco is spearheading the San Francisco Seawall Earthquake Safety and Disaster Prevention Program, an effort to strengthen and make critical safety upgrades to the Embarcadero Seawall. Immediate upgrades to the seawall may exceed \$500 million and full infrastructure improvements are estimated to cost up to \$5 billion. Funding will come from a variety of federal, state, local and private sources.

AB 2578 is sponsored by the Port of San Francisco, and Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) and Assemblymember Phil Ting (D-San Francisco) are co-authors of the bill.

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Assemblymember David Chiu (D–San Francisco) is the Chair of the Housing & Community Development Committee of the California State Assembly. He represents the 17th Assembly District, which encompasses eastern San Francisco. Learn more at: <https://a17.asmdc.org/>