

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 4, 2019

Dear Chairs Alexander and Kaptur and Ranking Members Feinstein and Simpson:

As you prepare the Senate and House Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bills, we respectfully request that you include report language that supports the Navigation and Ecosystem Restoration Program (NESP) and urges the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to move forward with preconstruction engineering and design (PED) of the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway System projects authorized in Title VIII of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (PL 110-114).

Our nation's water infrastructure plays a critical role in maintaining our competitiveness in the global economy by ensuring the safe and efficient movement of goods to market, but the current backlog of outstanding water infrastructure projects pending before the Corps is putting that competitiveness at risk. Congress recognized the importance of modernizing our water infrastructure when it authorized NESP in 2007. NESP is an important, dual-purpose program that allows the Corps to address both navigation and ecosystem restoration in an integrated approach that will result in the expansion of seven outdated locks along the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. Unfortunately, despite NESP's importance to our inland waterways system, few steps have been taken by the Corps to implement NESP since 2012.

To illustrate the broad bipartisan support in Congress for NESP and to urge the Corps to provide the funding needed to advance PED for the program, we request the inclusion of the following report language in the FY 2020 Energy and Water Appropriations bills:

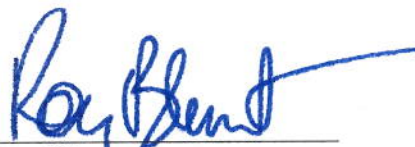
The Committee recognizes the importance of advancing the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) for the Upper Mississippi region and our nation's economy. As such, we urge the Corps to provide the appropriate preconstruction engineering and design (PED) funding needed to advance the projects authorized in Title VIII of the Water Resources and Development Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-114). Congress has already appropriated more than \$62 million in PED funding for this program, and the Committee recommends continued funding for PED this year in order for the program to receive new start construction funding as soon as such funding becomes available.

We urge full consideration of this critical language directing the Corps to move forward with PED for NESP. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Roy Blunt
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Jason Smith
Jason Smith
United States Representative

Tammy Duckworth
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

Amy Klobuchar
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

Tina Smith
Tina Smith
United States Senator

Bradley S. Schneider

Bradley S. Schneider
United States Representative

Dave Loebsack
Dave Loebsack
United States Representative

Wm. Lacy Clay
Wm. Lacy Clay
United States Representative

Sean Casten
Sean Casten
United States Representative

Chuck Grassley
Chuck Grassley
United States Senator

Cheri Bustos
Cheri Bustos
United States Representative

Marsha Blackburn
Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator

Josh Hawley
Josh Hawley
United States Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Bill Cassidy
United States Senator

Mike Quigley
Mike Quigley
United States Representative

Ron Kind
Ron Kind
United States Representative

Robin Kelly
Robin Kelly
United States Representative

Bill Foster
Bill Foster
United States Representative



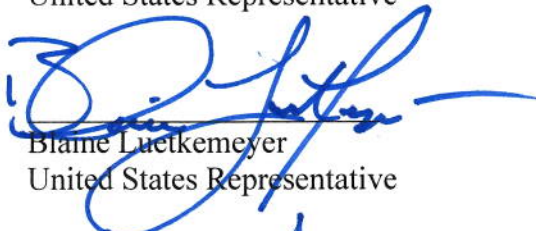
Mike Bost
United States Representative



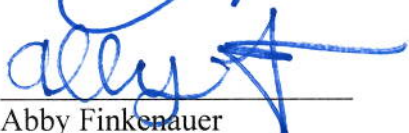
Daniel W. Lipinski
United States Representative



John Shimkus
United States Representative



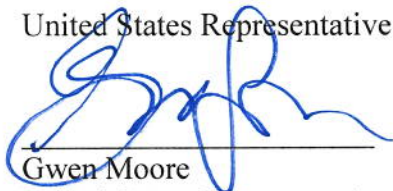
Blaine Luetkemeyer
United States Representative



Abby Finkenauer
United States Representative



Pete Stauber
United States Representative



Gwen Moore
United States Representative



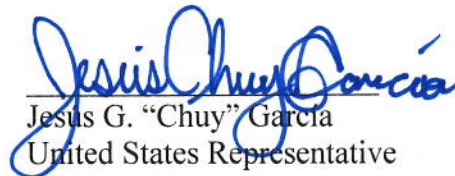
Angie Craig
United States Representative



Danny K. Davis
United States Representative



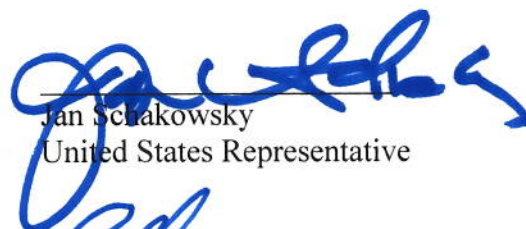
Adam Kinzinger
United States Representative



Jesus G. "Chuy" Garcia
United States Representative



Raja Krishnamoorthi
United States Representative



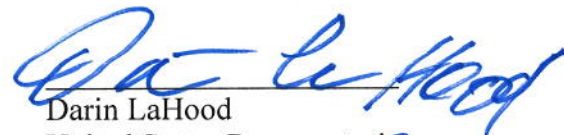
Jan Schakowsky
United States Representative



Bobby L. Rush
United States Representative



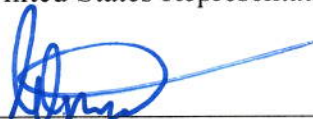
Ann Wagner
United States Representative



Darin LaHood
United States Representative



Sam Graves
United States Representative



Ilhan Omar
United States Representative



Bryan Steil
United States Representative



Rick Crawford
United States Representative



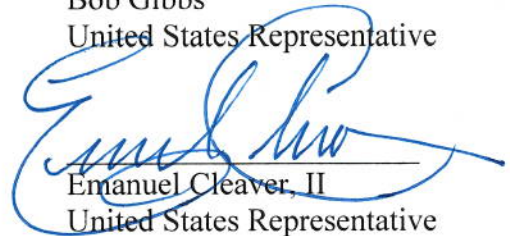
Tom Emmer
United States Representative



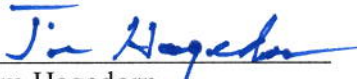
Bob Gibbs
United States Representative



Bruce Westerman
United States Representative



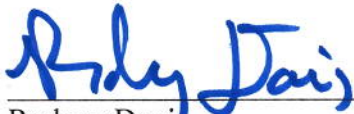
Emanuel Cleaver, II
United States Representative



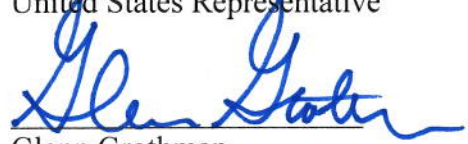
Jim Hagedorn
United States Representative



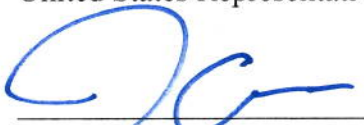
James Comer
United States Representative



Rodney Davis
United States Representative



Glenn Grothman
United States Representative



Jim Cooper
United States Representative



Mike Gallagher
United States Representative



Lauren Underwood
United States Representative