February 8, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-146A, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
186 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Chairmen Cochran and Alexander and Ranking Members Leahy and Feinstein:

On behalf of the undersigned navigation stakeholders, we write to respectfully urge you to pass a Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies (E&W) Appropriations Act to fund the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) navigation program. We appreciate your leadership in recognizing the nexus between water resources development and economic prosperity, and we appreciate your efforts to increase USACE navigation program funding. In comparing the E&W appropriations bill passed by the Senate and the bill approved by the House Appropriations Committee last year, for the programs listed below we request:

- $381.3 million additional Operations and Maintenance account funding included in the House bill,
- $325.25 million additional Construction funding included in the House bill,
- $50 million Donor and Energy Transfer Port funding in the Senate bill, and
- $15 million additional Investigations funding in the Senate bill.

We also support the following critical items addressed in both the House and Senate bills:

- Continued annual progress towards the goal of full Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT) funding for navigation channel maintenance;
- Supported full use of increased IWTF revenues on lock construction and major rehabilitations;
- Funding WRRDA-authorized navigation channel improvement projects;
- Continued annual funding increases for inland navigation operations and maintenance;
- Enabled existing USACE navigation planning studies to achieve WRRDA 2014’s three-year completion schedule and begin new navigation studies;
- Funded donor and energy transfer port work authorized in WRRDA 2014 Section 2106; and
- Providing for new study and construction starts.

Federal investments in navigation-related infrastructure are an essential and effective utilization of limited resources. These investments pay dividends through increased trade and international competitiveness, sustainable job creation and more than $200 billion annually in federal, state and local tax revenues. We welcome the opportunity to work with you and members of the Subcommittee and full Committee in support of passing a FY 2017 E&W Appropriations bill that will provide a robust navigation construction program, increased navigation channel availability and navigation lock reliability and timely completion of navigation studies. These efforts will enable safe and efficient freight movement that is essential to our nation’s 21st century economic growth.

Sincerely,

American Association of Port Authorities  
Waterways Council, Inc.
American Great Lakes Ports Association
American Iron and Steel Institute
American Petroleum Institute
American Road and Transportation Builders Association
American Society of Civil Engineers
American Waterways Operators
Associated General Contractors
Association of Ship Brokers and Agents
Big River Coalition
California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference
Connecticut Maritime Association
Connecticut Port Authority
Dredging Contractors of America
Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association
Gulf Ports Association of the Americas
Lake Carriers Association
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay
Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO
Maryland Port Administration
Massachusetts Port Authority
Propeller Club of Boston
National Association of Maritime Organizations
North Atlantic Ports Association
Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
Virginia Maritime Association