May 6, 2020

SENATE ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE PASSES AWIA (WRDA) BILL WITH INLAND WATERWAYS TRUST FUND COST-SHARE ADJUSTMENT

Today, the Senate Environment & Public Works (EPW) Committee marked up and passed by a 21-0 roll call vote America’s Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) of 2020, which included the Committee’s version of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).

The EPW Committee’s bill, reported to the Senate, includes WCI’s top WRDA priority to adjust the cost-share for construction and major rehabilitation of inland waterways projects. The Senate EPW Committee’s provision to adjust the cost-share from 50% from Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF)/50% General Revenues to 35% IWTF/65% General Revenues (in Section 1069 of the bill) is a significant step toward ensuring inland waterways construction and major rehabilitation projects advance more efficiently. This development benefits the Nation by potentially providing $1 billion in additional construction funds over 10 years.

The Senate bill also authorizes the Chief’s Report for Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Brazos River Floodgates and Colorado River Locks at 65% General Revenues/35% IWTF.

The bill also encourages the Corps to expedite the completion of the Kentucky Lock Post Authorized Change Report (PACR), which sets a new authorized amount for the total cost of construction on that project.

The House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee received Members’ WRDA priorities on May 1 and is beginning negotiations between the Majority and Minority. House markup of the bill is expected in June. WCI continues to urge that the House include the 75%/25% cost-share adjustment. A recent “Dear Colleague” letter led by Rep. Conor Lamb (D-PA) and Rep. Brian Babin (R-TX) sent to the House T&I Committee garnered 78 signatures in support of this cost-share provision. Several other Members of the House have indicated their individual requests to T&I included the cost-share provision.

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