

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 31, 2017

The Honorable Donald Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write to bring your attention to an issue that is vital to our nation's transportation infrastructure – properly maintaining America's harbors and navigation channels. The U.S. needs fully maintained navigation channels for safe and efficient freight transportation to the global marketplace.

In your budget request for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18), we urge you to include funding and estimates for harbor maintenance programs that are consistent with the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) and the Water Resources Development Act of 2016 (WRDA 2016). These bipartisan laws, which passed with overwhelming majorities in the House of Representatives and the Senate, provide three specific directions on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) harbor maintenance activities.

First, to end a long trend of USACE and Office of Management and Budget underfunding of harbor maintenance, Congress set increasing targets for appropriations from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) that reach 100 percent of annual revenues into the HMTF by FY25. WRRDA 2014's FY18 HMTF spending target is 74 percent of the projected amount of receipts into the HMTF during FY17.

Second, these Acts authorize \$50 million in additional funding for eligible donor ports and energy transfer ports to better reflect the economic contributions made by individual ports to the HMTF.

Finally, these Acts direct the USACE to include in its annual budget request two estimates: (1) an estimate of the nationwide average availability of the authorized depths and widths of all federally-maintained navigation channels that would result from each annual harbor maintenance budget request; and (2) an estimate of the average annual amount of appropriations from the HMTF that would be required to increase that availability to 95% over a three-year period.

The HMTF was authorized by the Harbor Maintenance Revenue Act of 1986. Revenue for the HMTF is derived from a 0.125 percent ad valorem tax imposed upon maritime cargo imports and domestic movement through specified U.S. ports, Saint Lawrence Seaway tolls, and investment earnings. General taxpayers do not contribute revenue to the fund.

While many transportation infrastructure programs are struggling to identify beneficiary-paid revenue streams to meet their needs, maritime commerce has been paying enough to meet the operations and maintenance needs of all federally-maintained harbors for decades, but the federal government has been withholding one-third to one-half of these payments. We urge you to dedicate harbor maintenance tax revenue for its intended purpose by including in your annual budget requests funding amounts for harbor maintenance that meet the WRRDA 2014 annual targets, as well as the two estimates described above.

U.S. ports serve as a critical link to connect U.S. manufacturers, farmers, and businesses with markets around the world and are indispensable to making the exports of U.S. goods cost-competitive. The inefficiencies resulting from inadequately maintained harbors hurt U.S. economic growth. If your Administration requests harbor maintenance appropriations consistent with the WRRDA 2014 targets, we are confident that Congress will work with you to provide those amounts. No new taxes or revenues are needed to do this.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

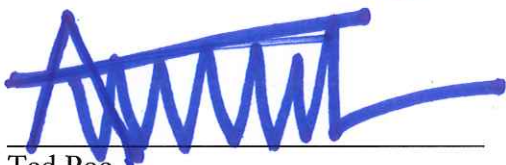
Sincerely,



Bill Huizenga  
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



Ted Poe  
Member of Congress



Gene Green  
Member of Congress

*Michael T. McCaul*

Michael T. McCaul  
Member of Congress

*Kathy Castor*

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

*Vern Buchanan*

Vern Buchanan  
Member of Congress

*Pete Olson*

Pete Olson  
Member of Congress

*Bill Posey*

Bill Posey  
Member of Congress

*John Culberson*

John Culberson  
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*Fred Upton*

Fred Upton  
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*Marcy Kaptur*

Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress

*Sheila Jackson-Lee*

Sheila Jackson-Lee  
Member of Congress

*Ileana Ros-Lehtinen*

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
Member of Congress

*Jeff Duncan*

Jeff Duncan  
Member of Congress

*Barbara Lee*

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

*Stephen F. Lynch*

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

*Patrick Meehan*

Patrick Meehan  
Member of Congress

*Sean Duffy*

Sean Duffy  
Member of Congress

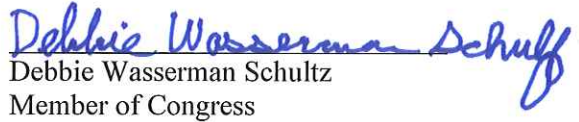
*Blake Farenthold*

Blake Farenthold  
Member of Congress





Kevin Brady  
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress



David P. Joyce  
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Glenn Grothman  
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Robin L. Kelly  
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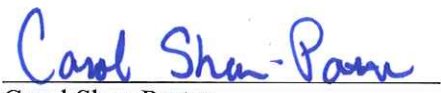
Carlos Curbelo  
Member of Congress



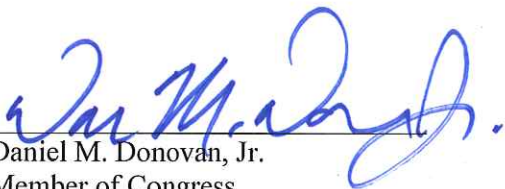
Tony Cárdenas  
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Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress



Carol Shea-Porter  
Member of Congress



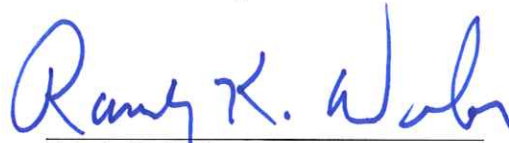
Daniel M. Donovan, Jr.  
Member of Congress



John Katko  
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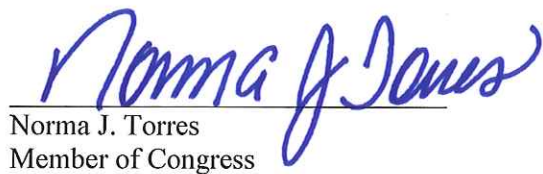
Mike Kelly  
Member of Congress



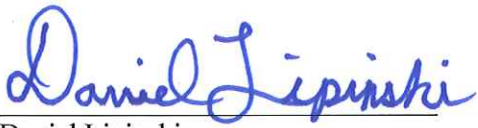
Randy K. Weber  
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Bill Johnson  
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Richard M. Nolan  
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Kurt Schrader  
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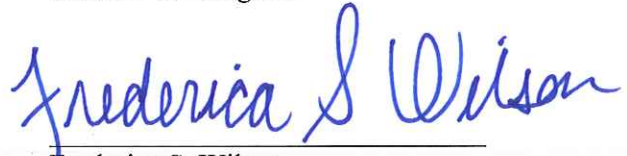
Todd Rokita  
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Bill Flores  
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Suzan K. DelBene  
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Frederica S. Wilson  
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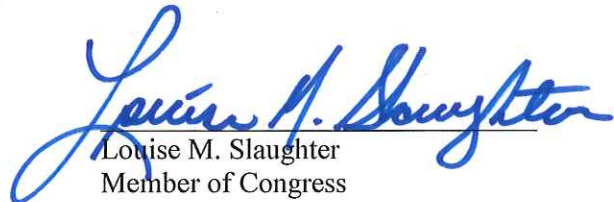
Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress



Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress



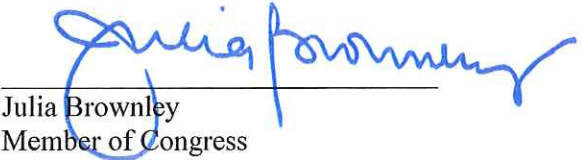
Eddie Bernice Johnson  
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Cherri Bustos  
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Julia Brownley  
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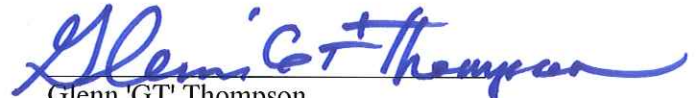
  
Dave Trott  
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Mike Gallagher  
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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress

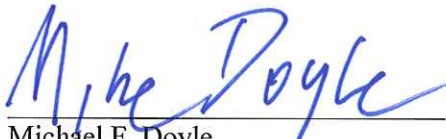
  
Bradley S. Schneider  
Member of Congress

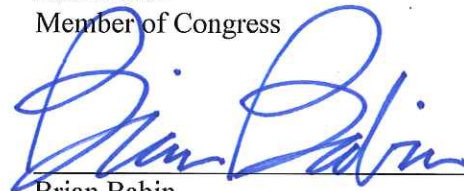
  
Bradley Byrne  
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Glenn 'GT' Thompson  
Member of Congress

  
Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress


  
Dan Kildee  
Member of Congress

  
Michael F. Doyle  
Member of Congress

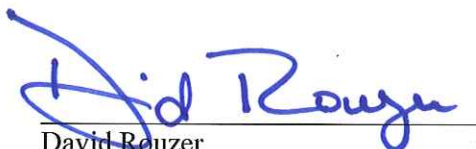
  
Brian Babin  
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Elise M. Stefanik  
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Ralph Abraham, M.D.  
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Jackie Walorski  
Member of Congress

  
David Rouzer  
Member of Congress

  
Denny Heck  
Member of Congress



*Earl L. 'Buddy' Carter*

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Member of Congress

*Ted S. Yoho*

Ted S. Yoho, DVM  
Member of Congress

*Claudia Tenney*

Claudia Tenney  
Member of Congress

*Cedric L. Richmond*

Cedric L. Richmond  
Member of Congress

*John Rutherford*

John Rutherford  
Member of Congress

*A. Donald McEachin*

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Member of Congress

*Michael E. Capuano*

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