



**Port of Pittsburgh
Commission**

December 7, 2016

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Gibbs
Chairman
Subcommittee on Water Resources & Environment
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Grace Napolitano
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Water Resources & Environment
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Shuster and Gibbs and Ranking Members DeFazio and Napolitano:

The Port of Pittsburgh Commission thanks you for your leadership and commitment to returning the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), which was included in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act, to a biennial process.

The Port of Pittsburgh consists of 200 miles of navigable waterway supporting at least 140 waterway related businesses throughout 12 counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. The waterway system of the Pittsburgh port district is tasked with transiting bulk commodities that keep the region economically sustainable in the most energy-efficient and environmentally friendly way. In 2014, 31.5 million tons of commodities valued at \$12 billion transited the local waterways, supporting tens of thousands of jobs.

In 2016, the most critical issue for the The Port of Pittsburgh and other users of the Ohio River System has been the Upper Ohio Navigation Study which examined options for improving the aging and failing locks and dams at Emsworth, Dashields, and Montgomery. These locks and dams, at 70 years of age, are the oldest navigation projects on the Ohio River System. Their severe state of degradation has them at an imminent risk of catastrophic failure which could shut down the entire port for a lengthy period, resulting in devastating effects on the regional economy and the health and livelihoods of its citizens. The vitality of this region is heavily dependent upon safe, reliable, efficient, and environmentally sustainable navigation. After 13 years and a cost of \$17 million, the Chief's Report was finally signed in September of 2016.

Of course, the signing of the Chief's Report is only the beginning. The completion of this project is dependent on the necessary funding to keep the project on schedule and prevent wasteful added costs due to delays. The Army Corps of Engineers has calculated an economic loss of \$1.29 billion each year the project is delayed.

4955 Steubenville Pike, Suite 245A
Pittsburgh, PA 15205
Voice: 412-201-7330
Fax: 412-722-1190
www.port.pittsburgh.pa.us



**Port of Pittsburgh
Commission**

Passing this legislation in regular order is critical to ensuring waterways reliability in order to keep the Port of Pittsburgh and its surrounding areas competitive and economically sustainable. The Port of Pittsburgh Commission offers its full support of WIIN, and urges its final approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Ann Bucci".

Mary Ann Bucci
Executive Director
Port of Pittsburgh Commission