

June 1, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515
c/o Geoffrey Antell

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515
c/o Katherine Monge

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) supports House of Representatives bill H.R. 8, the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2018. This legislation provides policy revisions to improve and streamline product delivery in the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' navigation program. AAPA represents public port agencies throughout the western hemisphere, including all major U.S. port authorities on the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico and Great Lakes coasts. This letter is on behalf of our U.S. members.

The nation's seaports are significant drivers of our economy, with more than 23 million jobs dependent on the cargo that moves through ports. More than one quarter of U.S. GDP is accounted for by international trade, and 99 percent of overseas trade moves through America's seaports. In addition, these federal navigation channels pay huge dividends, as maritime activity generates over \$320 billion annually in federal, state and local tax revenues.

The broad bipartisan support for this legislation is evidenced by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee passage of H. R. 8 by a voice vote. In addition, H.R. 8 is the successor to the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN) of 2016, which passed the House by a vote of 399 to 25. WRDA 2018 continues the trend of passing water resources legislation each session of Congress for maritime infrastructure improvements by expediting evaluations, enabling timely decisions and providing greater funding flexibilities, as well as authorizing new projects.

Moving forward, we look forward to working with you to include additional provisions to H.R. 8 that would ensure that all of the funds collected for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund are spent to ensure the continued availability and competitiveness of our nation's harbors. AAPA's U.S. members have reached a historic agreement on the future spending of the HMTF that will provide benefits to ports nationwide and help drive our economy

forward. The long-term solution fixes the current system and addresses the health and well-being of our seaport water highways that are critical for delivering goods and services to Americans. We urge you to work with us to include this agreement prior to the bill being enacted.

WRDA legislation provides the foundation for investments in America's 21st century maritime infrastructure enabling the U.S. to continue to be globally competitive in foreign trade – a key to expanding U.S. jobs and growing our nation's economy.

Sincerely,



Kurt J. Nagle
President & CEO

KJN/JW

cc: [Collin McCune](#), [Hannah Matesic](#), [Ian Bennitt](#), [Victor Sarmiento](#), [Ryan Seiger](#) and [Michael Brain](#)