



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WATERFRONT EMPLOYERS

December 6, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker of the House  
568 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
2433 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: Water Resources Development Act of 2024**

Dear Senate Leaders Schumer and McConnell, Speaker Johnson, and Minority Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the National Association of Waterfront Employers (NAWE), we express our full support for the prompt enactment of S. 4367, the Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024 (WRDA).

NAWE is a non-profit trade association representing privately owned stevedores, marine terminal operators (MTOs), and other U.S. waterfront employers. Our member companies are port operators and supply chain logistics providers at major U.S. ports along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes, and Puerto Rico. NAWA's members are critical in connecting maritime global commerce to our nation's economy. Enacting WRDA 2024, which focuses on increasing construction and maintenance depth thresholds, is of utmost importance. It will ensure the safe, reliable, and efficient movement of goods and passengers through our sea and inland ports and our system of channels, harbors, and navigable waterways. This will also contribute significantly to the growth and competitiveness of the U.S. economy.

NAWE commends Chairmen Carper and Graves, along with Ranking Members Capito and Larsen, for their collaborative efforts during the 118th Congress in agreeing on the final WRDA bill text. Among the vital provisions in the bill, our association particularly supports Section 111, which raises construction and maintenance depth thresholds.

Over the past several years, cargo vessel sizes have increased, necessitating deeper navigation channels. The opening of a new, wider Panama Canal, capable of accommodating vessels with greater cargo capacities, has further highlighted this need. Many U.S. ports are constrained by

National Association of Waterfront Employers  
660 Pennsylvania Ave SE, Suite 301A, Washington, DC 20003

[nawe.us](http://nawe.us)



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WATERFRONT EMPLOYERS

channel depths of 50 feet or less despite the ability of the largest vessels to carry more cargo. Adjusting these depth thresholds will make it more feasible for non-federal sponsors to construct and maintain deeper navigation channels, thereby enhancing the efficiency of U.S. import and export transportation.

Therefore, NAWE urges the immediate consideration and passage of WRDA 2024 in your respective chambers.

Sincerely,

Tom Saunders  
Chair, Board of Directors  
National Association of Waterfront Employers (NAWE)

CC: The Honorable Thomas R. Carper, Chairman, Committee on Environment & Public Works

The Honorable Sam Graves, Chairman, Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure

The Honorable David Rouzer, Chairman, Subcommittee on Water Resources & Environment

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito, Ranking Member, Environment & Public Works Committee

The Honorable Rick Larsen, Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure

The Honorable Grace Napolitano, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water Resources & Environment

National Association of Waterfront Employers  
660 Pennsylvania Ave SE, Suite 301A, Washington, DC 20003

[nawe.us](http://nawe.us)