April 29, 2013

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE:

The undersigned organizations urge you to move forward on S. 601, the “Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2013”, as soon as practicable. Long overdue, a new WRDA bill would reform and authorize U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ (Army Corps) Civil Works programs and policies related to navigation, flood risk management, recreation, infrastructure and environmental stewardship. We applaud the unanimous vote by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works as a true bipartisan effort to report this bill to the full Senate for further consideration.

This legislation would be an important step toward providing critical economic benefits to the nation, its people and businesses. Strategic investments in the nation’s navigation network have a dramatic direct-employment effect on the hardest hit segment of the economy—construction—while simultaneously delivering substantial benefits to the country’s global competitiveness. Based on a 2012 report conducted by the Associated Equipment Distributors, one dollar spent on infrastructure construction produces roughly double ($1.92) the initial spending in direct and indirect economic output. The long-term impact is also significant, with a dollar in aggregate public infrastructure spending generating $3.21 in economic output (GDP) over a 20-year period.

Maintaining our nation’s Federal channels to constructed dimensions and deepening channels to ensure the U.S. continues to have a world-class maritime transportation system are of critical importance to the health of the port and barge industries and the businesses and jobs that rely on them. International trade accounts for more than a quarter of the nation’s GDP and more than 38 million American jobs.

The United States needs to create a modern lock and dam infrastructure on the nation’s inland waterways. Effectively, all of America’s exports in commodities such as coal, fuel oils, gasoline, crude petroleum, and agriculture products such as grain and soy beans are shipped by water. Waterways are critical to keeping our domestic supply chain competitive. There is a $14-per-ton cost savings for shipping on the inland waterways; this translates to farmer, shipper, and consumer cost savings, and reduced congestion on the roads and rails. However, while the private sector constantly updates its operations, our 21st century economy relies on 1930s-era technology for locks and dams.

Levees got a D- in the most recent American Society of Civil Engineers report card. A WRDA reauthorization bill should improve the safety of the nation’s dams and levees that protect communities, farms, manufacturing facilities and assets.

S. 601 would deliver reforms and policies that would speed the Army Corps project delivery process, prioritize investments, provide resilience, protect communities, and keep faith with the Constitutional responsibility for supporting interstate commerce. Together, these results would create and sustain jobs and support the nation’s economy.
While a bill addressing a range of water issues and policies is not without some controversy, the United States should not miss opportunities to spur economic growth, improve our global competitiveness, and create jobs. We urge the Senate to move forward with consideration of a new WRDA bill—the time to act is now.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American Association of Port Authorities
American Concrete Pressure Pipe Association
American Council of Engineering Companies
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Foundry Society
American Public Works Association
American Road and Transportation Builders Association
American Society of Civil Engineers
American Soybean Association
Associated Equipment Distributors
Associated General Contractors of America
Association of Equipment Manufacturers
Clean Water Construction Coalition
Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute
Construction Management Association of America
International Liquid Terminals Association
International Propeller Club of the United States
International Union of Operating Engineers
Laborers International Union of North America
Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS)
NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association
National Grain and Feed Association
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association
National Retail Federation
National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS)
National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association
National Waterways Conference, Inc.
Plumbing Manufacturers International
Portland Cement Association
The American Institute of Architects
The Fertilizer Institute
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America
Waterways Council Inc.

Alabama

Alabama Associated General Contractors
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
Vulcan Materials Company

Alaska

Associated General Contractors of Alaska

Arizona

Arizona Chapter Associated General Contractors
Tucson Metro Chamber
Arkansas
Associated General Contractors of Arkansas  Western Arkansas Planning and Development District
Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce

California
Associated General Contractors of California Inc.  MWH Global
DC Inspections, Inc.  Palm Desert Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce  RSI Insurance Brokers, Inc
Mobility 21  United Contractors

Colorado
Associated General Contractors of Colorado  Colorado Contractors Association
CH2M HILL

Connecticut
Associated General Contractors of Connecticut  Connecticut Construction Industries Association

Florida
Associated General Contractors Florida East Coast Chapter  Intermodal Marine Lines, LLC
Associated General Contractors of Greater Florida  Maritime Transport & Logistics Advisors, LLC
Florida Chamber of Commerce  South Florida Associated General Contractors
Florida Inland Navigation District  Tampa Port Authority

Hawaii
General Contractors Association of Hawaii

Idaho
Idaho Associated General Contractors

Illinois
Caterpillar Inc.  Great Plains Laborer-Employers Cooperation & Education Trusts
Central Illinois Builders of AGC  Illinois Association of Aggregate Producers
Citizens Equity First Credit Union  Illinois Fertilizer & Chemical Association
Illinois (cont.)

Infrastructure Council of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce
MA Steel Erectors, Inc.
Mid-America Intermodal Authority Port District
Southern Illinois Builders Association

Indiana

American Commercial Lines Inc.

Iowa

Associated General Contractors of Iowa
Iowa Corn Growers Association
Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce

Kansas

Associated General Contractors of Kansas
Fidelity State Bank and Trust Company
Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce
Kansas Contractors Association

Kentucky

Associated General Contractors of Kentucky, Inc.
Associated General Contractors of Western Kentucky
Crounse Corporation
Heartland Care Management
James Marine, Inc.

Louisiana

Blessey Marine Services, Inc.
Cajun Industries, LLC
Cycle Construction Co., LLC
Louisiana Associated General Contractors

Maine

Associated General Contractors of Maine
Maine Better Transportation Association

Maryland

Maryland Associated General Contractors
Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association – MTBMA

Michigan

Associated General Contractors of Michigan
Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce
Minnesota

Associated General Contractors of Minnesota
Cargill, Incorporated

Minnesota Grain and Feed Association
Upper River Services LLC

Mississippi

Associated General Contractors of Mississippi

Chancellor & Son, Inc.

Missouri

Associated General Contractors of Missouri
Associated General Contractors of St. Louis

McCallie Marine Service, LLC

Montana

Montana Contractors Association

Nebraska

Associated General Contractors-Nebraska Building Chapter
Kiewit Corporation
Lincoln Chamber of Commerce

Nebraska Chapter Associated General Contractors
STP Advisory Services, LLC

Nevada

Nevada Chapter Associated General Contractors

Nevada Contractors Association Associated General Contractors

New Hampshire

Associated General Contractors of New Hampshire

New Jersey

Newark Regional Business Partnership

Utility Transportation Contractors Association - New Jersey

New Mexico

Associated Contractors of New Mexico
Associated General Contractors - New Mexico Building Branch

Greater Sandoval County Chamber of Commerce
New York

Associated General Contractors of New York State
Construction Industry Council of Westchester and Hudson Valley New York, Inc.

General Contractors Association of New York
Parsons Brinckerhoff

North Carolina

Carolinias Associated General Contractors

North Dakota

Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce

Ohio

American Electric Power
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber
Lake Carriers’ Association

Ohio Contractors Association
River Trading Company LTD

Oklahoma

Tulsa Regional Chamber

Oregon

Associated General Contractors Oregon Columbia Chapter

Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc.

Pennsylvania

Constructors Association of Western Pennsylvania

General Building Contractors Association
The High Cos.

South Carolina

Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce

South Dakota

Associated General Contractors of South Dakota
Tennessee
Associated General Contractors of East Tennessee
Associated General Contractors of Tennessee
Heavy Machines, Inc.
Ingram Barge Company
McDaniel-Whitley, Inc.
Mississippi Valley Branch - Associated General Contractors
Rogers Group Inc.

Texas
Associated General Contractors of Texas
Greater Houston Partnership
Halff Associates, Inc
Longview Chamber of Commerce
National Levee Issues Alliance
NCI Building Systems, Inc.
Orion Marine Group, Inc.
San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
The Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce

Vermont
Associated General Contractors of Vermont
Burke Mountain Resort

Virginia
Associated General Contractors of Virginia
R. Wilson, Inc.

Washington
Associated General Contractors of Washington
Washington Council on International Trade

West Virginia
Contractors Association of West Virginia

Wisconsin
Dairyland Power Cooperative