**WRRDA Conference Report and AAPA Recommendations**

Title 1, Program Reforms and Streamlining

AAPA advocated for these WRRDA provisions:

* Section 1001 – Vertical Integration and Acceleration of Studies: Directs Corps to implement 3x3x3 ‘to the maximum extent practicable’. AAPA advocated for streamlining and supported this approach while in Conference. The House version established a mandate of three years and one additional year, which was thought to be too rigid.
* Section 1002 – Consolidation of Studies: Eliminates the Reconnaissance Report for channel improvement studies.
* Section 1005 – Project Acceleration: Expedited environmental coordination, reviews and decisions
* Section 1006 – Expediting the Evaluation and Processing of Permits. Makes permanent the ability of the Corps of Engineers to accept funds for expedited regulatory permit evaluations. Also establishes the ability of public utility and gas companies to fund expedited reviews for seven years. AAPA had advocated for this change.
* Section 1014 – Study and Construction of Water Resources Development Projects by Non-Federal Interests: Conference Committee revision aligns with AAPA advocacy (1) on striking ‘… on their own’ which will enable Sponsors to fund the Corps for economic benefit determinations in Sponsor-led Feasibility Studies; and (2) striking the requirement for obtaining Congressional project authorization before the Secretary could sign an assumption of maintenance document.
* Section 1015 – Contributions by Non-Federal Interests: This expands who can contribute funds by adding “… and other non-Federal interests.”
* Section 1016 – Operation and Maintenance of Certain Projects. This provision addresses an issue of work underway before an assumption of maintenance agreement was signed.
* Sections 1018, 1019, 1020, 1021, 1022, 1023 – All address Credits for in-kind contributions, which expand a Sponsor’s flexibilities to expedite project completions.
* Section 1043 – Non-Federal Implementation Pilot Program. This aligned with AAPA’s recommendations on improving process streamlining.
* Section 1044 – Independent Peer Review. The Review threshold was raised from $45 million to $200 million. AAPA advocated to allow this provision to sunset in 2017 as past efforts did not show value for the cost and time to conduct this review.
* Section 1051 – relates to a Sense of the Congress that a WRDA bill should be passed not less than once every Congress.

Title 2, Navigation, Subtitle B – Port and Harbor Maintenance

* Section 2101 – Funding and Harbor Maintenance Programs. Establishes targets for future appropriations with increased annual amounts leading to full use of Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT) revenues by fiscal year 2025, although this provision still requires yearly Appropriations. AAPA advocated for full use of HMT tax collections and would have preferred mandatory spending.
* Section 2102 – Operation and Maintenance of Harbor Projects. Addresses expanded HMT use for donor ports, an AAPA HMT Reform Principle. It also revises the Corps of Engineers budget development process to extend beyond tonnage to consider national and regional significance, national security and military readiness. It includes funding carve-outs for emerging and Great Lakes harbors. It also established the term ‘underserved harbors’ to compare the funds received to funds needed to fully maintain the channel. A [flow chart](http://aapa.files.cms-plus.com/2014WRRDAsection2102Logo.pptx) has been developed to explain the funds distribution process.
* Section 2012 – Operation and Maintenance of Harbor Projects. The Section also revises the maintenance dredging cost-share threshold from 45 to 50 feet. AAPA has long advocated for this change in both the maintenance and deepening areas.
* Section 2103 – Consolidation of Deep Draft Navigation Expertise. Directed consolidation of expertise at the Center. AAPA advocated for this Center.
* Section 2104 – Remote and Subsistence Harbors. Added Alaska by name and established prioritization for these projects.
* Section 2106 – Additional Measures at Donor Ports and Energy Transfer Points. This further addresses the donor equity issue in AAPA’s HMT Principles. Authorizes $50 million to be appropriated in fiscal years 2015 through 2018. This Section has a different definition for Donor Port than Section 2102, with fewer ports qualifying. Funds appropriated under this authorization are to be evenly divided between Energy Transfer and Donor ports.

Title V – Water Infrastructure Financing, Subsection C – Innovative Financing Pilot Projects

* Section 5021 – Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 (WIFIA)
* Section 5022 – Definitions. Program will be administrated by the Environmental Protection Agency

The bill also includes provisions to de-authorize inactive projects, sunset new authorizations to prevent project backlogs, project modifications and authorize feasibility studies, including eight navigation projects totaling $2 billion in federal support.