



November 18, 2013

Dear WRDA Conferees:

We write to you today to respectfully request that language making Section 214 permanent be included in the final Water Resources Development Act. Permanence for this authority was included in both S.601 and H.R.3080. We urge you to maintain the provision both Chambers have agreed upon, striking the sunset date noted in subsection (e) of Section 214 of WRDA 2000 (33 U.S.C. 2201 note; 114 Stat. 2594, 117 Stat. 1836, 119 Stat. 2169, 120 Stat. 318, 120 Stat. 3197, 121 Stat. 1067).

Section 214 of WRDA 2000 was enacted to allow non-federal public entities to contribute funds to the Army Corps of Engineers to help expedite the processing of permit applications. In many parts of the country, the Corps faces a tremendous backlog of permit applications that must be reviewed. This backlog has imposed a great cost in lost jobs, reduced economic activity and a decline in international competitiveness. Since its enactment, Section 214 has become a vital tool in addressing these regulatory backlogs. Today, there are active WRDA Section 214 agreements between ten Corps Districts and 41 non-federal public entities, allowing ports, cities and counties across the nation to develop a level of predictability that was previously lacking.

With both the House and Senate in agreement to permanence, we are one step closer to achieving long-term reliability for this authority. Section 214, along with its counterpart authority utilized by DOTs (Section 6002(j) of SAFETEA-LU), allowed 1,799 permit decisions to be made in 2012 alone. These reviews issued by Section 214-funded staff are made with a higher level of agency review and public transparency, when compared with permitting activities that are not funded through Section 214.

At a time when ports, cities, and counties are working hard to spur economic development, the ability to have certainty with permit review times and project planning is more important than ever. Section 214 permanence will allow funded staff to remain on the job without interruption, and decisions on vital projects to be made in a timely fashion. After seven short-term extensions, we respectfully suggest that now is the time to make Section 214 permanent.

Thank you for your interest in this matter. We would be pleased to provide additional information to you or your staff, and to facilitate additional conversation regarding this important authority.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Kurt Nagle in black ink.

Kurt Nagle
Executive Director
American Association of

Handwritten signature of Kristin Meira in black ink.

Kristin Meira
Executive Director
Pacific Northwest

Handwritten signature of Amy Larson in black ink.

Amy Larson, Esq.
President
National Waterways



Port Authorities

Waterways Association

Conference

About AAPA. Founded in 1912, AAPA today represents more than 130 of the leading seaport authorities in the United States, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean and about 300 sustaining, associate and honorary members, firms and individuals with an interest in seaports. As a critical link for access to the global marketplace, each year, Western Hemisphere seaports generate about US\$9 trillion of economic activity, support the employment of tens of millions of people and import and export about 8 billion tons of cargo, including food, clothing, medicine, fuel and building materials, as well as consumer electronics and toys. As Western Hemisphere populations continue to rise, so too does the demand for goods, services and cruise offerings that depend on our seaports. To meet these demands, the AAPA and its members are committed to keeping seaports navigable, secure and sustainable.

About PNWA. PNWA advocates for federal policies and funding in support of regional economic development. We represent over 130 public and private sector member organizations in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and California. Members include public ports, navigation, transportation, trade, tourism, agriculture, forest products, energy and local government interests. Since our founding in 1934, PNWA has led the way for development of economic infrastructure for navigation, electric power and irrigated agriculture on the Columbia and Snake River System. In 1971, we expanded, adding Oregon and Washington coastal port members to provide a comprehensive regional perspective. Today, PNWA works with the U.S. Congress, federal agencies and regional decision leaders on transportation, trade, energy and environmental policies and projects to enhance economic vitality in the Pacific Northwest.

About NWC. The National Waterways Conference, established in 1960, is dedicated to a greater understanding of the widespread public benefits of our nation's water resources infrastructure. Our mission is to effect common sense policies and programs, recognizing the public value of our nation's water resources and their contribution to public safety, a competitive economy, national security, environmental quality and energy conservation. Conference membership is comprised of the full spectrum of water resources stakeholders, including flood control associations, levee boards, waterways shippers and carriers, industry and regional associations, port authorities, shipyards, dredging contractors, regional water supply districts, engineering consultants, and state and local governments.