



DAVID A. RAYMOND
PRESIDENT & CEO

September 17, 2013

Chairman Bill Shuster
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Nick J. Rahall II
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Bob Gibbs
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Water Resources & Environment
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Timothy H. Bishop
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Water Resources & Environment
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member Rahall, Chairman Gibbs, and Ranking Member Bishop:

I am writing on behalf of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) – the voice of the nation’s engineering industry – to offer our strong support for the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA). This bipartisan legislation includes critical reforms that will enhance the ability of federal and state agencies and their private sector partners to more efficiently deliver critical water resource projects to the public.

ACEC members – numbering more than 5,000 firms representing more than 500,000 employees throughout the country – are engaged in a wide range of engineering works that propel the nation’s economy and enhance and safeguard America’s quality of life. These works allow Americans to drink clean water, enjoy a healthy life, take advantage of new technologies, and travel safely and efficiently.

Passage of WRRDA should be a top congressional priority. Investments in projects to enhance the nation’s ports and waterways, reduce flood risks, and bolster resilience against storms will save lives and property, create jobs and strengthen the nation’s long-term economic competitiveness. The last water resources bill became law in 2007, and new policy changes and reforms are needed to modernize water resources infrastructure and maintain the flow of commerce. We commend the bill for its numerous reforms to improve the process of delivering projects to the public while maintaining responsible environmental safeguards.

As the Committee moves forward with this legislation, we urge you to protect the critical role that America’s engineering industry plays in partnering with federal and state agencies on water resource projects. Congress embraced this principle previously in WRDA 2000 through adoption of the so-called Thomas Amendment, which sought to limit instances where the Corps of Engineers could provide commercial engineering services to state and local governments in competition with the private sector. We ask that you oppose efforts to weaken the protections included in Section 211 of WRDA 2000, and to reaffirm the Committee’s support for a strong public/private partnership in addressing the nation’s water resource needs.

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act is a responsible step in the right direction towards addressing America’s water resources infrastructure needs. We look forward to working with you to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David A. Raymond", is written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.