



October 11, 2013

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall II
Ranking Member
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member Rahall:

On behalf of the National Association of Counties (NACo), we would like to thank you for your leadership and support of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2013 (WRRDA). NACo is the only organization that represents 3,069 county governments and their elected and appointed officials.

WRRDA is instrumental in addressing many water resource issues important to counties such as navigation channels, harbors, beach management, levee and dam repair, aquatic ecosystems, flood emergency and water infrastructure projects through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). This long-standing federal, state and local government partnership is vitally important to ensure these projects move forward while maintaining the health and well-being of our citizens.

We are pleased the bill contains a number of provisions of specific interest to our counties such as the Army Corps of Engineers Vegetation Management Policy clarifications, language including state and local governments in decision-making processes, pilot programs that allow local governments the lead role in implementing projects and studies, levee safety, invasive species.

We do, however, ask for your consideration to fully fund the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF), as it is in Title VIII of the Senate WRDA (S. 601) bill. HMTF is essential to improved port maintenance, especially in light of increased international trade. Not only are ports important nationally, local economies also are highly dependent on harbors, it is to our benefit to ensure they are dredged to their authorized depths and widths. NACo also believes that Title VIII moves in the right direction by authorizing several expanded uses for donor states that contribute more to the HMTF than they receive back in harbor maintenance funding.

We thank you for your support. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my staff Julie Ufner (Jufner@naco.org/ 202.942.4269).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew D. Chase". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "M".

Matthew D. Chase
Executive Director
National Association of Counties

cc: Members of the U.S. House of Representatives