December 8, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senate Majority Leader Schumer, Senate Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and House Minority Leader McCarthy:

The undersigned organizations support the inclusion of the bipartisan Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2022 in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and urge swift action by Congress to ensure this critical legislation moves to the President’s desk to become law before the end of the year. WRDA is critical biennial legislation that authorizes water resources infrastructure projects that maintain the health of our nation’s ports and modernizes inland waterway infrastructure to benefit key manufacturing and consumer goods transfer ports.

The U.S. maritime infrastructure system is a critical link of the American economy. In 2020, the U.S. maritime transportation system—consisting of harbors, ports, channels, locks, dams and waterways—delivered over $1.8 trillion worth of imports and exports.\(^1\) The U.S. coastal port and inland waterway system support over 2.5 million jobs associated with the shipping industry.\(^2\,^3\) Many commodity markets rely on waterborne commerce, including farm and livestock products, raw materials and minerals, coal, iron ore, petroleum and petroleum products, and consumer goods. Additionally, coastal ports and the inland waterway system support 28 million jobs in these and related industries.\(^4\) With many American jobs and markets dependent upon our waterways and infrastructure and conflicts overseas threatening the global supply chain, a healthy and reliable maritime system is more important than ever in keeping domestically produced goods and markets competitive.

As a significant contributor to the economic success of our local communities, states, and nation, the health of our maritime system is critical to our way of life. Moreover, dependable, modernized maritime infrastructure is essential to maintaining and enhancing U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace. Accordingly, the undersigned organizations strongly support your bipartisan leadership to improve our nation’s infrastructure and urge swift action by Congress to pass the NDAA before the end of the year.

\(^1\) 2022 USDOT, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, U.S.-International Freight Trade by Transportation Mode  
\(^2\) PwC. Economic Contribution of the US Tugboat, Towboat, and Barge Industry. May 10, 2017  
\(^3\) Martin Associates. 2018 National Economic Impact of the U.S. Coastal Port System. March 2019  
\(^4\) Martin Associates. 2018 National Economic Impact of the U.S. Coastal Port System. March 2019
Sincerely,

American Association of Port Authorities
American Chemistry Council
American Council of Engineering Companies
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers
American Petroleum Institute
American Society of Civil Engineers
Associated General Contractors of America
Big River Coalition
Chamber of Shipping of America
Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Co, LLC
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Corn Growers Association
National Mining Association
National Waterways Conference
The American Waterways Operators
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Waterways Council, Inc.

Cc: Members of the Committee on Environment and Public Works

Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

1 2022 USDOT, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, U.S.-International Freight Trade by Transportation Mode
2 PwC. Economic Contribution of the US Tugboat, Towboat, and Barge Industry. May 10, 2017