

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

February 13, 2018

R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Washington DC, 20310

Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. James and Mr. Mulvaney:

We write to express our strong support for a new, innovative, and cost-effective approach for the completion of the McCook Reservoir Project, a major flood damage reduction reservoir of the Chicagoland Underflow Plan (CUP). We also request that \$34.7 million in construction funds—the remaining federal share of Stage 2 of the McCook Reservoir Project—be included in the Corps of Engineers Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Work Plan.

The McCook Reservoir Project, which was authorized by Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 1988, is a flood damage reduction project that is currently 91 percent complete. This project, which will provide \$114 million in annual flood damage reduction benefits to five million residents of Chicago and 36 surrounding suburban communities, has a 2.96 to 1 Benefit Cost Ratio. The McCook Reservoir Project is considered one of the Corps' premier flood damage reduction projects, due to the size of the population protected, its high ratings on the Corps' Health Safety Budget Index, and its high Benefit to Cost Ratio. Both stages of the project have been budgeted, and the project has been under construction for more than ten years.

To provide for the cost-effective completion of the project, we request a lump sum payment of \$34.7 million in construction funds for McCook be included in the Corps' FY 2018 Work Plan. We also request that the Corps use their authority under Section 1043 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2014 to transfer responsibility for the completion of the remainder of the project to the non-federal sponsor, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD). MWRD is willing to enter into a Project Cooperation Agreement Amendment with the Corps to reflect this transfer of funds and responsibility for the project. MWRD also is willing to take responsibility for any additional costs beyond the \$34.7 million to complete the project.

This unique and cost-effective arrangement is the result of discussions between MWRD leadership, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Assistant Secretary of the Army (ASA)'s office, and Corps Headquarters. This arrangement reflects a cooperative effort to complete the project in a timely way, limit exposure for the federal government, and empower a non-federal sponsor to bring the project through construction on schedule and on budget. Congress envisioned this new type of partnership when it included Section 1043 in WRDA 2014.

Delivering these flood benefits is critical for Illinois and the five million citizens of the region who will be protected by this project. We urge you to include \$34.7 million for the McCook Reservoir Project in the Corps' FY 2018 Work Plan and approve the transfer of authority for the project to MWRD.

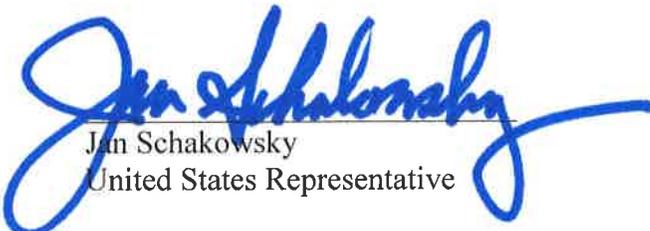
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator


Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator


Mike Quigley
United States Representative


Jan Schakowsky
United States Representative


Daniel W. Lipinski
United States Representative


Peter J. Roskam
United States Representative


Danny K. Davis
United States Representative


Bill Foster
United States Representative


Raja Krishnamoorthi
United States Representative


Bobby L. Rush
United States Representative

CC: Lieutenant General Todd T. Semonite
Commanding General and Chief of Engineers
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G St, NW
Washington, DC 20314