

Legislative Committee & Port of Pittsburgh Commission Report – Scott Harshman (Port of Pittsburgh), Chair;
Legislative Committee: Scott Harshman, Pat Kelly, and George Petrus

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:

1. Priorities:

- Continue to support Upper Ohio River Navigation System & Lower Mon Projects
- Oppose additional taxation, tolling, and lockage fees
- Fully utilize and draw down funding from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund
- ***For navigation projects, like the Montgomery L/D project, identified as “funded to completion” with Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding, advocate that these projects should continue to be 100% funded from the General Treasury -- not cost-shared -- and consistent with Congressional intent***

2. Congressional Appropriations

- Request submitted last year to Congress for an additional \$41 million in funding needed for the Lower Mon Project is still working its way through the legislative process.
- Federal Fiscal Year 2024 began October 1st. Congress passed yet another short-term Continuing Resolution in mid-November to keep the government funded. Of particular importance to the inland waterways, **the Energy and Water appropriations bill which funds the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Civil Works Programs**, along with agriculture, housing, transportation, and veterans’ programs continue to operate under the previous year’s funding level **until January 19th**. All other agencies are extended through **February 2nd**.
- **Congressional leaders reached an agreement earlier this week** on top line spending levels for current FY24 appropriation bills which is a positive sign.
- ***To keep current lock and dam infrastructure projects as well as those scheduled for future work on track, including both the Lower Mon and Upper Ohio Projects, it is extremely important that the FY24 appropriations for the Corps’ Civil Works Programs gets final approval in early 2024. Any further delay, or if Congress decides to pass a long-term CR, would be detrimental to these infrastructure modernization efforts.***

3. Water Resources Development Act of 2024

- Both the House and Senate have started to work on the next WRDA bill – our priorities will be:
 - IIJA projects should be 100% federal funded (as highlighted in Section 1 above)
 - No further reduction in the Allegheny River’s existing Levels of Service classification by the US Army Corps of Engineers
- Legislative Committee will work with WAP Members throughout the year on advocacy efforts in support of WRDA 2024.

PORT OF PITTSBURGH COMMISSION:

1. United States Marine Highway Program

- Expect next Marine Highway Notice Of Funding Opportunity in March 2024
- PortPitt will be holding a webinar on the Marine Highway Program and other grant programs either in late January or early February

2. Future Events

- WCI’s annual Capitol Hill Fly-In in Washington, DC on February 6th – 8th
- Next Lunch & Learn likely in Tarentum in February/March
- 120th Annual Pittsburgh Traffic Club Dinner on March 21st

END