

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 23, 2016

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick
Commanding General and Chief of Engineers
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20314-0000

Dear Secretary Darcy and General Bostick:

We are deeply concerned about the latest delay to the completion of the Upper Ohio Navigation Study, which has already taken nearly thirteen years and cost taxpayers over \$17 million. As you know, the study reviewed at least eight options for improving navigation through the aging and unreliable Emsworth, Dashiields, and Montgomery (EDM) locks and dams, leading to the recommendation that a new 600 by 110 foot lock be constructed at each site.

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' own estimates, failure to complete this \$2.3 billion project will cost the region \$430 million per site each year – a total negative economic impact of \$1.29 billion annually. **The economy of Pennsylvania depends on the completion of this project, and the jobs and well-being of our constituents is at stake as the Army Corps' review process faces yet another year or more of delays.**

As you know, the inland waterway system serves as a vital commercial transportation link for millions of Americans. The Port of Pittsburgh alone handles over 35 million tons of cargo each year, including significant quantities of petroleum products, processed metal, grain, construction equipment, chemicals, and coal. Reports of interruptions to shipping traffic through the EDM locks are not uncommon and Army Corps is well-aware of the negative impacts of these incidents. In fact, when the Corps Civil Works Review Board (CWRB) unanimously approved the EDM project's draft feasibility study in October 2014, the CWRB's presiding officer asserted that "the (Corps) cannot afford to wait on more analysis."

With this in mind, we are extremely troubled that the signing of the final EDM feasibility study is being unnecessarily delayed over disagreements about the estimated costs of failing to complete the project. According to post-CWRB peer reviewers, the feasibility study, which already assigns the project a 2.6 benefit-cost ratio (BCR), underestimated the costs associated with a navigation-interrupting lock failure absent EDM's completion. In other words, the EDM project will be delayed further because analysts believe the project to be *even more justified* than initially estimated and intend to take over a year to prove it.

Neither Pennsylvanians nor the American economy can afford to wait any longer for this project to get underway. Absent safety concerns, we find any additional delays to be unreasonable and counterproductive.

Accordingly, we request a prompt explanation and justification of this latest delay as well as an updated description of the proposed timeline for study completion. We also request that the Army Corps provides an estimate of the negative economic impact of this delay. Finally, we urge the Army Corps to do everything in its power to expedite the completion of this study.

Sincerely,



Keith Rothfus
Member of Congress



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



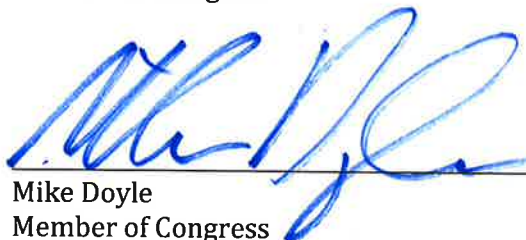
Mike Kelly
Member of Congress



Tim Murphy
Member of Congress



Glenn Thompson
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle
Member of Congress