

Promoting Beneficial Use of Water & Land Related Resources



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April 13, 2020

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Committee on Environment and Public Works

United States Senate

Washington D.C. 20510

Senator Thomas Carper, Ranking Member

Committee on Environment and Public Works

United States Senate

Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

The Missouri and Associated Rivers Coalition (MOARC) is writing in support of the *Lower Missouri River Flood Prevention Program Act* proposed by Senator Blunt (MO) and championed by Senator Blunt and Senators Hawley (MO), Sasse (NE), Fischer (NE), Grassley (IA), Ernst (IA), Roberts (KS) and Moran (KS).

MOARC is a water resource advocacy organization supporting regional interests in effective water resource development within the Missouri River basin and its associated rivers. Development of flood risk management to provide greater levels of flood protection to communities, businesses, and farming within the basin has been one of the organization's primary missions since 1952. Frequent and devastating flood events experienced on the Missouri River requires programmatic level actions (seamless development from planning to construction) to address improved flood protection for both the citizens and economy within the lower Missouri River basin. The economic losses and human suffering experienced in 2019 showed the need for changes and greater protection prior to future flood events.

The Programmatic Act proposed by Senator Blunt provides greater efficiencies and streamlining with regard to how the USACE plans for and manages Missouri River water resource development projects from inception to completion. Specifically, the *Lower Missouri River Flood Prevention Program Act* would:

- Require the Secretary of the Army to administer a program to study, design, and construct water resources development projects, and modify completed water projects, to provide flood protection to affected communities;
- Direct program authority to encompass 735 miles of the Missouri River (from Sioux City, Iowa, to the mouth of the river);
- Require the Secretary of the Army to develop a system plan for reducing flood risk and improving flood resiliency;
- Provide authority, after development of a project feasibility report, for the Secretary of the Army to construct projects where the federal share does not exceed \$75 million. This would streamline and facilitate the USACE's ability to initiate feasibility studies and planning for projects within a certain funding threshold where the agency traditionally has to seek separate authorization for these types of activities;
- Require congressional authorization for projects where the federal share exceeds \$75 million. The federal cost-share for feasibility reports and construction would be 80%; and;
- Require consultation with applicable federal and state agencies, tribes, and stakeholders.

MOARC membership joins regional partners within the lower Missouri River basin in strong support of the proposed *Lower Missouri River Flood Prevention Program Act* and thanks Senator Blunt and the regional congressional offices for their support of the proposed language. We formally request the inclusion of the proposed programmatic act within EPW development of the 2020 water bill.

**PO Box 22647 · Kansas City, MO 64113**

*Flood Control & Risk Management, Water Quality & Supply, Power, Environment, Agriculture, Shipping & Ports and Recreation*

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MOARC was established in 1952 in response to severe flooding that ravaged the greater Kansas City region in 1951. Since then, MOARC has advocated for better water and related land resources management in the Missouri River basin.

MOARC and our membership are supportive of the *Lower Missouri River Flood Prevention Program Act* as it is needed to set our region on a path to recovery and prevent future losses.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Poer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Poer, P.E., PMP, ENV SP

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