

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 14, 2013

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

Dear Secretary Darcy:

We are writing to call your attention to an important matter concerning the Great Lakes. While the Great Lakes navigation system is threatened due to underfunding, which has been worsened due to lakes levels that have hit record lows, the system also was damaged by Hurricane Sandy. This storm covered 900 miles, and impacted 24 states, including states surrounding the Great Lakes. Across the Great Lakes, gale force winds caused damage to breakwaters and silted in harbors and channels. On Lake Huron, wave heights reached 23 feet, in Lake Michigan the waves peaked at 22 feet, and the storm caused waves of 14 feet in Lake Erie.

Congress provided \$50.5 billion in supplemental appropriations to aid the victims of Hurricane Sandy and to rebuild and strengthen areas impacted by Hurricane Sandy. Included in this funding is \$821 million for the Army Corps of Engineers for expenses related to the consequences of Hurricane Sandy. During debate on the bill, the Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senator Mikulski, provided assurances in a colloquy that Great Lakes federal navigation projects that were damaged as a result of Hurricane Sandy would indeed be eligible for some of the \$821 million in funding for navigation projects.

The Army Corps of Engineers estimates that Great Lakes federal navigation project incurred damages totaling \$17.7 million. We urge you to speedily direct this funding to Great Lakes projects so that breakwaters and piers can be repaired, and harbors and channels can be dredged to restore functionality.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Sherrod Brown


Carl Levin



Al Franken



Debbie Stabenow



Richard J. Durbin



Rob Portman