

December 7, 2020

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chairman
Environment and Public Works Committee
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Carper
Ranking Member
Environment and Public Works Committee
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Barrasso and DeFazio and Ranking Members Carper and Graves:

The cement industry commends the conference report agreement on S. 1811, the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020, to advance critical U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects across the country. The Portland Cement Association (PCA) especially supports the legislation's steps to advance the resiliency of Corps projects.

As you may know, PCA represents 91 percent of the U.S. cement production capacity, with a presence in all 50 states. Concrete forms when portland cement is mixed with water and aggregate (sand and rock) and allowed to harden. Cement holds the mixture together and has a similar role to flour in cake mix. Concrete plays an important role in the construction of water infrastructure projects across the country.

Our nation's waterways play a critical role in the movement of cement from manufacturing plant to market. Annually, the cement industry ships approximately 35 percent of our product from plants to terminals by barge, demonstrating these systems are vital for American commerce. Additionally, water infrastructure construction is a critical market for cement in the United States. For every billion spent on water construction, approximately 211,000 metric tons of cement will be consumed.

Passage of WRDA 2020 is essential to continuing the two-year cycle of passing legislation to authorize and advance new Corps projects. PCA supports the authorization of 46 pending Corps Chief's Reports, 27 feasibility studies, and six comprehensive river basin studies to advance critical water infrastructure projects in communities across the country.

Additionally, the cement industry supports the steps taken by WRDA 2020 to unlock the existing balance of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund by providing the authority to appropriate \$2 billion in additional funds annually for harbor maintenance needs. Providing between \$3.5 billion and \$4 billion in annual

investment in port maintenance will help address the backlog in investment needs at ports across the country.

Finally, the cement industry supports taking steps to improve the resiliency of the nation's water infrastructure and recognizes the critical role cement plays in making infrastructure more resilient. While the legislation recognizes the role of natural and nature-based features in building more resilient infrastructure, it also ensures that before the Corps considers natural and nature-based alternatives in the feasibility of flood risk management and hurricane and storm damage reduction projects, they must also include estimates of long-term costs and benefits of such alternatives. This will ensure the best and most cost-effective project alternatives are used in Corps flood risk and hurricane reduction projects over the long-term.

Again, thank you for your continued leadership in advancing critical water infrastructure legislation. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (703) 321-6792 or soneill@cement.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sean O'Neill".

Sean O'Neill
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs