



The Honorable Tom Carper  
 Chairman  
 Senate Committee on Environment  
 & Public Works  
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
 Ranking Member  
 Senate Committee on Environment  
 & Public Works  
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sam Graves  
 Chairman  
 House Committee on Transportation  
 & Infrastructure  
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen  
 Ranking Member  
 House Committee on Transportation  
 & Infrastructure  
 Washington, DC 20515

September 4, 2024

Dear Chairmen Graves and Carper, and Ranking Members Larsen and Capito:

We would like to congratulate you on passage of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2024 in the House of Representatives (H.R. 8812) and the Senate (S. 4367). Biennial passage of WRDA is critical to ensuring that the nation’s dams, levees, ports, and inland waterways remain effective, and we greatly appreciate your efforts to keep passage of WRDA on schedule for 2024. As the House and Senate begin to conference their respective bills, we encourage you to include Section 128 of H.R. 8812- Improvements to the National Dam Safety Program- in any final agreement that is produced.

The National Dam Safety Program (NDSP) plays a vital role in ensuring the safety of the nation's 92,000 dams. First authorized in 1996, the NDSP is the nation's primary source of federal funding for dam safety programs at the state level. NDSP State Assistance Grants support state dam safety activities such as inspection, monitoring, emergency preparedness, and other staffing and training needs. The NDSP also supports the maintenance and repair of dams which pose the greatest risk to the public through the High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation Grant Program. High hazard potential dams are those dams which would likely result in loss of life and significant destruction of property in the event of a dam failure.

Unfortunately, the NDSP's legislative authority officially expired on September 30, 2023. Since then, the program has been operating using previously appropriated funds. Section 128 would reauthorize the National Dam Safety Program through 2028, increase the amount of funds states may receive through State Assistance Grants, improve access to the High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation Grant Program for small, disadvantaged communities, and provided needed clarification on program eligibility requirements.

In 2021, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave the nation's dams a grade of "D" in its *Report Card for America's Infrastructure*. And in 2023, the Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO) estimated that the cost of bringing the nation's dams into a state of good repair stood at more than \$157 billion. Reauthorizing the National Dam Safety Program and improving access to the High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation Grant Program will help states better monitor the condition of dams and dam owners to make necessary repairs to those dams with high hazard potential before a catastrophic failure threatens the lives of people in downstream communities. We strongly support the inclusion of Section 128 of H.R. 8812 in any final WRDA 2024 agreement.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. If you have any questions, we encourage you to contact Matthew McGinn ([mmcginn@asce.org](mailto:mmcginn@asce.org)) with ASCE or Cody Holt ([cholt@damsafety.org](mailto:cholt@damsafety.org)) with ASDSO.

Sincerely

American Society of Civil Engineers  
Association of State Dam Safety Officials  
American Council of Engineering Companies  
American Rivers  
American Whitewater  
Association of State Floodplain Managers  
Low Impact Hydropower Institute  
National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies  
National Hydropower Association  
The Nature Conservancy  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
U.S. Society on Dams