



Duckworth Asks for Study on how Illinois Can Boost Resilience Against Future Flooding

May 15 2019 3:26 PM

– U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Tom Carper (D-DE) are asking the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct a study on how the federal government is managing flood risk management infrastructure in the Midwest. After record-setting flooding across Illinois this spring, Duckworth, the ranking member of the Senate Fisheries, Water and Wildlife Subcommittee, requested GAO examine how the Army Corps of Engineers can increase the resilience of levees to protect against future flooding as well as produce a report on how levees are planned and maintained in a way that would minimize climate-related risks.

“Recent reports of costly levee breaks throughout the Midwest paint a dire picture of flood risk management infrastructure never designed to withstand the river levels seen in the last decade,” the Senators wrote. **“As sea level rises and certain extreme weather events increase in intensity and frequency, we as a nation will have to make decisions about prioritizing federal investments to enhance resilience against future disasters. To do so, we would like to know that taxpayer-funded flood risk management infrastructure, such as levees, are planned and maintained in a way that would minimize climate-related risks for various stakeholders, thus reducing overall fiscal exposure.”**

Since 1990, GAO has provided Congress with a report on “High Risk” issues of national importance. The current High Risk list includes “Limiting the Federal Government's Fiscal Exposure by Better Managing Climate Change Risks” as an urgently important matter. Climate change is bringing extreme weather events with increasing frequency and intensity to the Midwest. Earlier this month, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker issued a disaster proclamation for 34 counties along the Mississippi and Illinois rivers for record river crests, both of which reached major flood levels. In Rock Island, the Mississippi River crested to a record-high 22.7 feet on May 2.

A full copy of the letter is available [here](#).