

Duckworth, Durbin Highlight Illinois Priorities Included in Major Water Infrastructure Bill Now Heading to President's Desk

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WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW) as well as Ranking Member on EPW's Fisheries, Wildlife and Water Subcommittee, and U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) applauded the inclusion of several key priorities that will help Illinois in

the *Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) 2020 Reauthorization*, which passed the Senate yesterday as part of the omnibus agreement and now heads to the President's desk to be signed into law. The legislation will help enhance protections for Chicago shorelines, advance Illinois lock and dam modernization projects, increase funding for Great Lakes port and harbor projects, safeguard the Great Lakes from the scourge of Asian Carp and advance critical improvement projects along Chicago-related waterways in addition to including \$65 million to modernize degraded pump stations in flood-prone communities along the Mississippi River.

“This legislation includes many provisions I fought for to strengthen our state's economy and public health while creating good-paying jobs,” said Duckworth. “This bill will help enhance our improve flood protections, safeguard our environment, modernize our inland waterways and protect the Great the Lakes. I'm proud to have worked with Senator Durbin and my colleagues in the Senate to send this important legislation—and the Illinois-focused provisions in it—to the President's desk.”

“Improving Illinois' waterways infrastructure is critical in keeping our state competitive economically and supporting communities,” Durbin said. “This year's bill funds several key projects, including protection for Lake Michigan, prevention against the spread of Asian Carp, lock and dam modernization, flood control, and support for the Army Corps of Engineers. I was proud to work with Senator Duckworth to secure this funding that will benefit cities, towns, and communities across the state.”

The 2020 WRDA reauthorization includes the following Duckworth and Durbin priorities:

- **Modifies and Improves Inland Waterways Cost-Sharing:** This provision will help expedite seven lock and dam modernization projects on the Illinois and Upper Mississippi Rivers to give farmers and other industries a competitive advantage in the global marketplace.
- **Protects the Great Lakes from the scourge of Asian Carp and reduces costs for Illinois:** Building on previous efforts by Senators Duckworth and Durbin, the bill authorizes the construction of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam Project and lowers construction costs for Illinois taxpayers.
- **Enhances protections for Chicago shorelines and expedites improvements to the Chicago River:** The bill will help Chicago shoreline protection and resiliency efforts for areas affected by recent flooding by providing a new funding stream for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to study the expansion of the Chicago

Shoreline Project. It also reinforces a federal commitment to the Chicago River Restoration Framework Plan that will inform future restoration projects along the Chicago River.

- Includes \$65 million to repair or replace degraded pump stations in flood-prone communities along the Mississippi River, like Cairo, Illinois, that often do not have the resources necessary to protect themselves from increased rainfall and flooding. This provision will help the USACE to rebuild and better protect these areas.
- Increases funding for Great Lakes port and harbor projects: The bill reforms the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) and increases the percentage of HMTF funding directed to Great Lakes projects to 13%, up from 9.8% last year. This funding will help to address the \$550 backlog of maintenance work at Great Lakes ports throughout the region.
- Advances critical improvement projects along the Chicago Area Waterways (CAWS) System by authorizing USACE to conduct the necessary feasibility studies to advance ecosystem restoration, recreation and other projects in Chicago-related waterways, including portions of the Illinois River, Chicago River, Calumet River, Grand Calumet River and Little Calumet River. It also authorizes the Bubbly Creek Restoration Project on the South Branch of the South Fork of the Chicago River.
- Establishes new emergency fund for Upper Mississippi dredging: The new \$25 million emergency reserve fund will support dredging and mitigation projects along the Upper Mississippi River in response to significant flood events like last year's historic flooding.