

Congressman Conor Lamb (PA-17)

Chairwoman Kaptur, Ranking Member Simpson, and Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today in support of funding for the United States Army Corps of Engineers, especially funding for the Civil Works Program, Investigations Account, where the Upper Ohio Navigation Project could compete for funding.

As the easternmost gateway of the Inland Waterways System, the Port of Pittsburgh has a strategic location in moving freight to and from the Northeastern and Middle Atlantic regions. The three locks on the Upper Ohio River that are included in the Upper Ohio Navigation Project, the Emsworth, Dashields, and Montgomery Locks, are the oldest of the entire Ohio River system. They are all more than 70 years old. The current condition of these locks is a state of critical structural and operational degradation. They are increasingly at risk of structural or operational failure that could halt navigation for a year or longer. This type of a major failure would effectively close the entire Port of Pittsburgh and would greatly impact the steel and energy industries that are essential to our national security and our regional economies in Western Pennsylvania, the Great Lakes Region, and beyond. In addition to impacting commercial freight, pool loss from a failure would affect municipal and industrial water intakes, recreation, and wildlife habitats in my own and many other districts. I have brought these pictures to further illustrate how dire the situation is back home.

The long-term solution, is to ensure the highest possible funding for the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Civil Works Program, Investigations Account, so that the Upper Ohio Navigation Project can compete for funding and undergo the desperately needed overhaul that

would allow for the construction of new lock chambers along the three locks on the Upper Ohio River, including the Montgomery Lock that you see here.

In addition to these funds, I ask for your consideration for other important funding levels within the Corps' Civil Works Program that are vital to our shared interests in making certain that we have safe and reliable infrastructure. This includes \$330 million for the Inland Waterways Trust Fund construction account, which will maintain the same level of funding for projects that Congress provided in FY19. I also urge you to provide a FY20 Operations & Maintenance funding level at or above the \$3.740 billion level provided in the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2019.

I was pleased to lead a bipartisan appropriations letter with members from across the Northeastern and Middle Atlantic regions, whose districts directly benefit from the Upper Ohio Navigation Project, including Congressman Doyle, Congressman McKinley, Congressman Johnson, and Congressman Reschenthaler. Thank you again for the chance to share my perspective and the importance of the Upper Ohio Navigation Project before the Committee today. I greatly appreciate your consideration of funding for these important programs.