

Water Resources Development Act of 2022
Members' Day Hearing
Congressman Frank J. Mrvan
March 16, 2022

Full Committee Chair DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves, Subcommittee Chair Napolitano and Ranking Member Rouzer, I appreciate the opportunity to testify at today's hearing in order to advocate for the priorities of Indiana's First Congressional District in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2022.

On behalf of Indiana's First Congressional District, I am seeking a \$25 million increase in the total federal authorization for the Section 219 - Calumet Region Environmental Infrastructure Program, from \$100 million to \$125 million. As you know, Section 219 of WRDA 1992 authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to assist non-federal sponsors at a 75/25 percent cost share in the planning, design, and construction of municipal drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects. The Section 219 Environmental Infrastructure Program authority has been integral to the efforts of local communities to improve their quality of place, safeguard the public health of their citizens, and sustainably utilize their water resources.

I would like to tell you more about how local communities in Indiana's First Congressional District would benefit from a \$25 million increase in the Calumet Region Environmental Infrastructure Program. There are approximately 653,000 people living in Lake and Porter Counties, and these counties are home to major industrial interests. Many of these communities rely on sewer systems, such as combined sewers, that were built in the early 1900s and are undersized for the current population base. This has resulted in frequent sewage backups into residential structures; street and overland flooding; and discharges into the Little Calumet River, Grand Calumet River, Burns Waterway, Deep River, Salt Creek, and associated streams and ditches feeding into these waterways.

A \$25 million increase in Section 219 funding authority for the Calumet Region will ensure continued construction assistance to eliminate or control combined sewer overflows, to remove failing septic systems, and to provide clean drinking water as well as additional infrastructure designed to protect area rivers and streams leading into Lake Michigan. The more that we responsibly invest in the water-related infrastructure of Northwest Indiana under Section 219, the more we can reduce residential and commercial property owner and insurance losses, maintain our transportation networks and minimize disruptions due to flooding, and improve the local environment and the health of our waterways. Additionally, these investments assist in the economic development within the region, improving the efficiencies within sewer systems and wastewater treatment plants and expanding capacity to bring new developments online.

In conclusion, Chair DeFazio, Ranking Member Graves, Chair Napolitano, and Ranking Member Rouzer, I thank you once again for the opportunity to testify today. I believe that the Section 219 authority remains an indispensable tool to distressed, recovering, and growing municipalities as they seek to upgrade our local infrastructure. I look forward to working with all of you as the Committee considers my request for a \$25 million increase in the Calumet Region Environmental Infrastructure Authority.