



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

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William T. Pound
Executive Director

Sept. 19, 2013

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
United States House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall II
Ranking Member
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
United States House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C., 20515

Re: Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund Reform within the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2013

Dear Chairman Shuster and Representative Rahall:

On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) we would like to thank the committee for its bi-partisan work to protect, maintain and further develop our nation's waterways. We are pleased with your efforts regarding the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) within the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2013 (WRRDA). NCSL recognizes the substantial economic benefits, including access to the world's markets, that the U.S. system of waterways and ports provides.

As the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee continues its work on legislation that would reauthorize water resource funding, we would like to familiarize the committee with NCSL's stance on certain issues associated with the Water Resources Reform & Development Act.

The accumulation and expenditure of receipts within the HMTF is a topic that is addressed in significant detail by the committee as part of its WRRDA legislation. NCSL recently approved its Waterways and Ports Policy Directive (enclosed), which states that "NCSL opposes the accumulation of harbor tax receipts at the federal level, as it is a break in faith from the purpose of the Harbor Maintenance Tax and results in the imposition of a competitive burden without providing needed improvements to achieve efficiencies to offset added taxes. Additionally, NCSL believes that Congress should adequately fund deepening projects to modernize our ports and make full use of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to maintain the nation's harbors."

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Again, we applaud the committee for addressing the current misallocation of receipts within the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund. NCSL would welcome the opportunity to further discuss our position on the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund or other issues of importance to state legislatures that the committee may consider in the 113th Congress. Please contact Ben Husch (ben.husch@ncsl.org) or Melanie Condon (melanie.condon@ncsl.org) for any additional information.

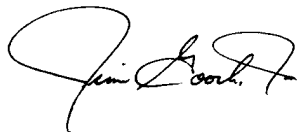
Sincerely,



Representative John McCoy, Washington
Co-Chair, NCSL Natural Resources and
Infrastructure Committee



Senator Ross Tolleson, Georgia
Co-Chair, NCSL Natural Resources and
Infrastructure Committee



Representative Jim Gooch Jr., Kentucky
Co-Chair, NCSL Natural Resources and
Infrastructure Committee



Senator John C. Watkins, Virginia
Co-Chair, NCSL Natural Resources and
Infrastructure Committee

Attached: National Conference of State Legislatures Waterways and Ports Policy Directive