

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 27, 2018

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Capito and Ranking Member Tester:

As you develop the FY 2019 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill, we urge you to provide \$25 million, as authorized, for the High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation Grant program.

Enacted in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN) of 2016, this program provides federal grant assistance for the rehabilitation, repair, or removal of nonfederal high hazard potential dams. These are dams where failure is probable to cause loss of human life and endanger population centers and ecosystems. This grant program enables state and local governments, as well as non-profit organizations, to enter into partnerships in order to address safety issues concerning dams that are not covered by other federal dam safety programs.

According to the Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO), there are approximately 15,500 high hazard potential dams — at least one in almost every state. Moreover, in the American Society of Civil Engineers' (ASCE) 2017 report card, dam safety received a D. The average age of dams in the United States is 56 years, which means that many of these dams have reached or are reaching the end of their design life and many have not been adequately maintained for decades. As more people have moved to and developed areas below dams, the number of high-hazard dams has grown from 10,213 in 2005 to 15,500 in 2015. ASCE notes that "until this program is funded a lack of financial resources will continue to be a reason dam owners are unable to implement needed repairs and upgrades."

The grants that would be provided through the High Hazard Potential Dam Safety program would aid states in taking proactive steps to ensure dam failure does not lead to loss of life and property. By including \$25 million for this program to assist in the repair and removal of high hazard dams before they fail, we can make an investment in future cost savings as well as the safety of local communities.


Thank you for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to working with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,




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Jack Reed  
U.S. Senator




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Margaret Wood Hassan  
U.S. Senator




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Richard Blumenthal  
U.S. Senator




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Tammy Duckworth  
U.S. Senator



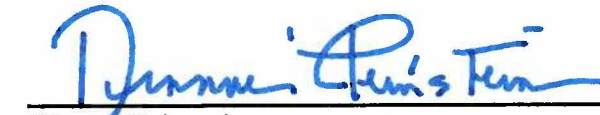
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Sheldon Whitehouse  
U.S. Senator



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Richard J. Durbin  
U.S. Senator



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Dianne Feinstein  
U.S. Senator




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Catherine Cortez Masto  
U.S. Senator



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Debbie Stabenow  
U.S. Senator




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Kamala D. Harris  
U.S. Senator




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Bernard Sanders  
U.S. Senator



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Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
U.S. Senator



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Jeffrey A. Merkley  
U.S. Senator



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Joe Manchin III  
U.S. Senator



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Mazie Hirono  
U.S. Senator



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Elizabeth Warren  
U.S. Senator



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Benjamin L. Cardin  
U.S. Senator