SEAN PATRICK MALONEY
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COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–3218

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May 4, 2018

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member DeFazio:

As you develop the Water Resources and Development Act of 2018, I urge you to include a clean reauthorization of the National Dam Safety Program.

I was pleased that language from my Dam Safety Act of 2013, which reauthorized the National Dam Safety Program, was included in the Water Resources Reform & Development Act (WRRDA). The program, which was reauthorized through Fiscal Year 2019, provides federal grant assistance to state dam safety agencies for training dam safety engineers, research, the creation of a National Inventory of Dams, and a public awareness and outreach program. This program is not only critical to my district in the Hudson Valley, which contains nearly a quarter of the State's High Hazard Dams, but communities across the country. To prevent a lapse in authorization between WRDA 2018 and WRDA 2020, I urge the Committee to reauthorize the program a year early in WRDA 2018.

America's 90,580 dams provide essential benefits to the nation, including as flood control; a water supply for domestic, agricultural, and community use; a clean, renewable hydropower energy source; and as spaces for recreation. The American Society of Civil Engineers' *2017 Infrastructure Report Card* gave the nation's dams a grade of "D" due to the aging of those infrastructure systems and a generations-long underinvestment in them.

More than half of our nation's dams are owned by private entities, and these structures rely on state dam safety programs for inspection. Although state dam safety programs bear a large responsibility for public safety, many lack sufficient resources to be effective. Fortunately, the National Dam Safety Program has been providing much-needed funding (about $9 million per year out of its full authorization level of $13.9 million per year), which has enabled states to improve their dam safety programs, and thus, reduce risks to life and property. Reauthorizing the National Dam Safety Program would allow for continued updating of the National Inventory of Dams; for increased training, technical assistance, and research; and for the creation of a public awareness and outreach program meant to assist the public in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from dam incidents.

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

Sincerely,

Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

cc: Representatives Garret Graves and Grace Napolitano, Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment