



May 8, 2019

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Chairman  
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
2134 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Ranking Member  
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
1135 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Grace Napolitano  
Chairman  
Water Resources Subcommittee  
United States House of Representatives  
1610 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
Ranking Member  
Water Resources Subcommittee  
United States House of Representatives  
209 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Kelly  
Member  
United States House of Representatives  
1707 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio, Chairman Napolitano, Ranking Member Graves, Ranking Member Westerman, and Representative Kelly:

On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and the public officials we represent, we commend you for introducing H.R. 2440, the Full Utilization of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund Act, which would unlock billions in already collected fees intended to maintain our nation's federal ports and harbors.

We have long opposed the accumulation of harbor tax receipts at the federal level, as it is a break in faith from the original intent of the Harbor Maintenance Tax and results in the imposition of a competitive burden without providing needed improvements to achieve efficiencies necessary to offset added taxes. Congress must make full use of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to maintain the nation's harbors.

Our organizations believe that in order to sustain U.S. leadership in global trade, the nation's ports must receive adequate federal funds to improve and maintain federal navigational channels – including funding for deepening projects to modernize our ports. The Full Utilization of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund

Act will enable the necessary expenditures over the next decade to allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to dredge all federal harbors to their constructed widths and depths.

We welcome the opportunity to continue working with Congress to upgrade our nation's ports and harbors. Please feel free to contact Ben Husch (202-624-7779 or [ben.husch@ncsl.org](mailto:ben.husch@ncsl.org)) or Matt Hardy (202-624-3625 or [mhardy@ashto.org](mailto:mhardy@ashto.org)) for more information.

Sincerely,



William T. Pound  
Executive Director  
National Conference of State Legislatures



Jim Tymon  
Executive Director  
American Association of State Highway and  
Transportation Officials