

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 20, 2020

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:

We write to thank you for providing \$10 million for the High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation Grant program in the FY 2020 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill. As you prepare the FY 2021 bill, we ask you to provide as close to the authorized level of \$60 million as possible for this important program.

Enacted in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act 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 more than 15,500 high hazard potential dams across the country. And in the American Society of Civil Engineers' (ASCE) 2017 report card, dam infrastructure received a "D." Moreover, 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.

The grants provided through the High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation program would aid states in taking proactive steps to ensure dam failure does not lead to loss of life and property. By including \$60 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.

Sincerely,

Jack Reed

Tony Dochow

Kirsten Hillbrand

Jeffrey A. Murbey

Elizabeth Han