January 16, 2015

U.S. Senator Thad Cochran Renews Call for Transparency and Public Engagement in Development of Flood Risk Management Standard

ARLINGTON, VA – In a letter to the President late yesterday, U.S. Senator Thad Cochran (R-Miss) again urged the President to work with the Congress and other stakeholders in the development of a new flood risk management standard. Cochran, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, renewed the request initially made in his November 20, 2014 letter, stating that the public and its elected representatives deserve to understand the costs, benefits and scientific rationale behind any such standard before it is issued. Sen. Cochran further expressed his concern that issuance of any agency guidance, executive order or memorandum before such input has been solicited and considered would be in opposition to the clear intent of Congress, which had been expressed in a bipartisan provision of law.

The National Waterways Conference, the National Levee Issues Alliance and the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association join together in support of Senator Cochran’s call for an open and transparent process. Efforts by the Mitigation Framework Leadership Group (MitFLG) to incorporate practicable intergovernmental risk management and mitigation into planning, decision-making and development activities can only be achieved by the meaningful involvement of elected representatives from state, local and tribal governments, as well as private industry and nongovernmental representatives, as provided for in the MitFLG charter. In order to develop an effective, balanced and lasting standard to achieve our shared goal of increasing protection levels for the American people, its capital assets, economic productivity and natural resources, there must be a meaningful opportunity for dialogue and discussion, as well as a thorough understanding of the costs and benefits of any new requirements. Anything less would represent a missed opportunity that the American public simply cannot afford.

As this process continues, the National Waterways Conference, the National Levee Issues Alliance and the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association will continue our efforts to develop a broad-based coalition in support of a balanced approach to floodplain management and infrastructure strengthening, giving due consideration to the economic and human uses, as well as environmental and ecological considerations, to ensure the wise use of our productive floodplains for the safety, security and well-being of all Americans and their families. Please contact us if you would like to be part of this coalition.

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