

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 25, 2006

The Honorable Bill Frist, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Harry Reid, Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Frist and Senator Reid:

Wise investment in our water resources remains an urgent need in our country. America's communities continue to face the threats posed by flooding and other natural disasters. The devastation along the Gulf Coast last year underscores the importance of shoring up our defenses against catastrophic floods in all areas of the nation. With these points in mind, we urge you to schedule floor time for the Water Resources Development Act (S. 728) at the start of this session of Congress.

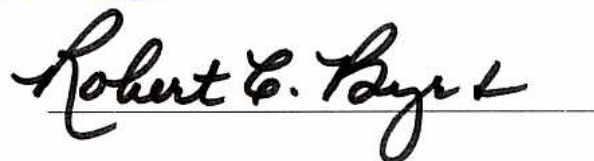
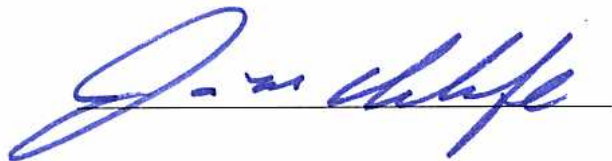
As you know, this bill authorizes critical flood control, shore protection, dam safety, storm damage reduction, and environmental restoration projects across the country. These projects, subject to appropriations, will help protect America's communities from the destruction caused by severe weather and flooding, as well as enhancing natural means of protection by restoring our fragile ecosystems. Furthermore, these projects save taxpayers money by decreasing the recovery costs associated with disasters.

In addition, this legislation is needed to support our nation's vital waterways and ports – key components of our national transportation system and the backbone of a healthy economy.

Recent hurricanes and severe storms have taught the nation a tragic lesson: maintain and improve our aging flood control and water resources infrastructure or risk the ruin and destruction of our communities. This bill moves us in the right direction toward addressing and preventing these grave threats to public safety.

It has been five years since the last WRDA was enacted into law. In contrast, three WRDA bills were enacted from 1995 to 2000 with an accumulated authorized cost level that surpasses the current bill. Local and state non-Federal cost-sharing partners cannot afford any further delay. We urge you to act expeditiously to bring this important bill to the full Senate for immediate consideration.

Sincerely,



Henry Thomas

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(Pg. 2. WRDA 1/25/06)

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