

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

March 13, 2012

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Chairman  
U.S. House Committee on the Budget  
207 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on the Budget  
B-71 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Ryan and Ranking Member Van Hollen:

As you formulate the Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, we respectfully request that you apportion all FY13 estimated Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT) proceeds towards this tax's intended purpose—maintenance dredging of our nation's ports and harbors.

Our harbors and related waterways are significant drivers of our economy, employing more than 13 million Americans and conveying almost \$4 trillion in international trade. Almost a quarter century ago, Congress recognized the importance of these assets and created a reliable stream of maintenance dredging funding in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF). Unfortunately, over the last decade, the Bush and Obama Administrations have failed to fully utilize this fund, allocating only one-half to two-thirds of the revenue generated by the HMT towards harbor maintenance.

As a result, the HMTF has already accumulated a surplus of more than \$7 billion while the majority of our nation's harbors—including eight of the 10 largest ports—are not being maintained to their fully authorized widths and depths, thus constricting our ability to export products, engage in international trade and create jobs. The Administration's request for FY13 continues this trend, only allocating around half of the HMTF's projected collections to this fund's intended purpose.

At a time when the national unemployment rate continues to exceed eight percent, we believe it is imperative that all the revenue generated by the HMT be fully committed towards dredging our nation's ports, an activity that will put Americans back to work and return economic prosperity to our manufacturing, agriculture and energy sectors.

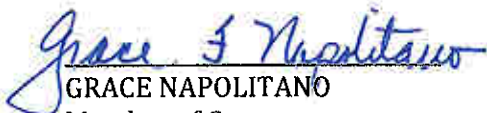
From our perspective, it is inappropriate for Congress to impose a tax for one purpose only to utilize the proceeds from this tax as a mechanism to finance spending on other programs. If we allow this trend to continue we are only degrading the taxpayer's trust of "user-pays" accounts within the Federal government, such as the HMTF, the Highway Trust Fund, and the Aviation Trust Fund.

Considering this information, we respectfully ask that you fully apportion the estimated HMT receipts towards maintenance dredging. We thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of this request and stand ready to assist you in any way necessary.

Respectfully,

  
JEFF LANDRY  
Member of Congress

  
TIMOTHY BISHOP  
Member of Congress

  
GRACE NAPOLITANO  
Member of Congress

  
CEDRIC RICHMOND  
Member of Congress

  
MIKE THOMPSON  
Member of Congress

  
BLAINE LUETKEMEYER  
Member of Congress

  
BILL SHUSTER  
Member of Congress

  
MARCY KAPTUR  
Member of Congress


  
STEVE LATOURETTE  
Member of Congress

  
DORIS MATSUI  
Member of Congress

  
LARRY BUCSHON  
Member of Congress

  
JOHN CONYERS, JR.  
Member of Congress

  
DAVID SCOTT  
Member of Congress

  
AARON SCHOCK  
Member of Congress


  
BILL OWENS  
Member of Congress

  
BLAKE FARENTHOLD  
Member of Congress

  
STEVE SOUTHERLAND  
Member of Congress

  
MAZIE K. HIRONO  
Member of Congress

  
BILL CASSIDY  
Member of Congress

  
SEAN DUFFY  
Member of Congress

  
BILL POSEY  
Member of Congress

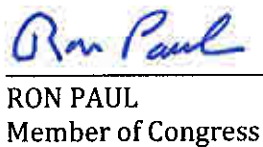
  
BOB FILNER  
Member of Congress


  
CANDICE MILLER  
Member of Congress

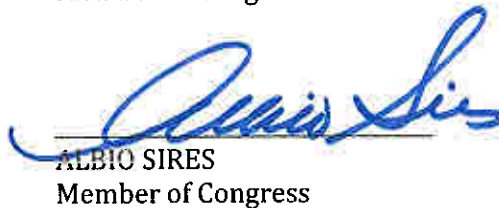
  
DENNIS KUCINICH  
Member of Congress

  
BETTY SUTTON  
Member of Congress

  
MICHAEL MICHAUD  
Member of Congress

  
RON PAUL  
Member of Congress

  
STEVE SCALISE  
Member of Congress

  
ALBIO SIRES  
Member of Congress

  
CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS  
Member of Congress

  
PEDRO R. PIERLUISI  
Resident Commissioner

  
LOUISE SLAUGHTER  
Member of Congress

  
JERRY COSTELLO  
Member of Congress

  
KURT SCHRADER  
Member of Congress

  
MICHAEL GRIMM  
Member of Congress

  
GARY PETERS  
Member of Congress

  
DANIEL WEBSTER  
Member of Congress

  
RUBEN HINOJOSA  
Member of Congress

*Walter B. Jones*

WALTER B. JONES  
Member of Congress

*John C. Carney*

JOHN CARNEY  
Member of Congress

*Sam Graves*

SAM GRAVES  
Member of Congress

*Don Young*

DON YOUNG  
Member of Congress

*Alcee Hastings*

ALCEE HASTINGS  
Member of Congress

*Peter DeFazio*

PETER DEFAZIO  
Member of Congress

*Michael E. Capuano*

MICHAEL CAPUANO  
Member of Congress

*Russ Carnahan*

RUSS CARNAHAN  
Member of Congress

*Joe Wilson*

JOE WILSON  
Member of Congress

*Robert G. Dold*

ROBERT DOLD  
Member of Congress

*Corrine Brown*

CORRINE BROWN  
Member of Congress

*Andy Harris M.D.*

ANDY HARRIS  
Member of Congress

*Leonard L. Boswell*

LEONARD BOSWELL  
Member of Congress

*Trey Gowdy*

TREY GOWDY  
Member of Congress

*Lois Capps*

LOIS CAPPS  
Member of Congress

*Pete Stark*

FORTNEY "PETE" STARK  
Member of Congress

*Bill Huizenga*

BILL HUIZENGA  
Member of Congress

*Barbara Lee*

BARBARA LEE  
Member of Congress



THOMAS PETRI  
Member of Congress



MIKE MCINTYRE  
Member of Congress



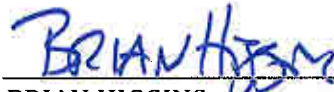
CHELLIE PINGREE  
Member of Congress



JERROLD NADLER  
Member of Congress



LAURA RICHARDSON  
Member of Congress



BRIAN HIGGINS  
Member of Congress



GREGG HARPER  
Member of Congress



MIKE KELLY  
Member of Congress



PATRICK MEEHAN  
Member of Congress



JACKIE SPEIER  
Member of Congress



NICK RAHALL, II  
Member of Congress



SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO  
Member of Congress



BILL JOHNSON  
Member of Congress



JAMES B. RENACCI  
Member of Congress



TIM WALBERG  
Member of Congress



ROBERT T. SCHILLING  
Member of Congress