

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 19, 2019

Lt. General Todd T. Semonite  
Commanding General & Chief of Engineers  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
441 G Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20314

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Lt. General Semonite and Administrator Wheeler:

We write to express our strong continued backing for the Eastern Long Island Sound Dredged Material Disposal Site (ELDS) and to share our support for Electric Boat to dispose of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved dredged material in the site. As you know, our region has worked towards building a comprehensive management framework with the Army Corps of Engineers and the EPA to meet long-term dredging needs, and we are committed to ensuring that the ELDS is fully utilized to support our region's maritime priorities.

Earlier this year, General Dynamics Electric Boat submitted a permit application with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for the placement of 890,000 cubic yards of dredged material in the ELDS. Per the rules of the Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) for the region, New York State has until December 27, 2019 to respond to the proposal. We fully support the agreed-upon framework in which all Long Island Sound stakeholders, through the Regional Dredging Team (RDT), can evaluate proposed projects in established disposal sites in the sound. However, it is our hope that as this process moves forward, all stakeholders will evaluate this project fairly and on its merits – and not use it as an opportunity to restrict projects in our region from access to disposal options that have been painstakingly developed over more than a decade.

Access to the ELDS is absolutely vital to the economy of our states and districts – and that of the entire Long Island Sound region. According to the aforementioned DMMP, economic activities that utilize Long Island Sound waterways contribute to more than \$9 billion annually in economic output. Additionally, these economic activities support more than 55,000 jobs in the Long Island Sound region. As important, our region is host to a range of federal and military facilities dependent on the viability of accessible and cost-effective placement options. These include facilities like Naval Submarine Base New London and premier submarine builder Electric Boat, with facilities in both Connecticut and Rhode Island.

For Electric Boat, eliminating the use of the ELDS will have significant financial ramifications. After front-end dredging and barge loading costs of \$25 million, the cost of disposal in the ELDS is an additional \$12 million. However, if required to transport to the CLDS or the Rhode Island dredging site, it would cost an estimated additional \$37-43 million—over triple the cost of the ELDS. In addition to financial implications, lack of access to the ELDS will mean an increase in carbon emissions from dredging vessels and a greater risk of dredged material spills.

Electric Boat is a major economic driver in Connecticut and Rhode Island, and plays a pivotal role in supporting our national security. The proposed use of the ELDS would directly support one of the nation's most urgent national security priorities – namely, the construction of the Columbia class

submarine. Beginning late next year, Electric Boat will begin construction of the new submarine to replace our aging fleet of Ohio-class sea-based strategic deterrent submarines. In order to support this work, Electric Boat is constructing a new \$600 million construction facility at the south end of its yard, which includes the proposed dredging and placement of material in the ELDS. Given the tight timelines required for replacing these vessels without gaps in our strategic deterrence requirements, any delays or roadblocks to this work threatens the progress of a program that has been cited as the highest priority for the Defense Department. As the dredged material disposal process proceeds, we urge all stakeholders to remain committed to the goals of the DMMP that all parties agreed to when finalized in 2015. Thank you for your attention to this urgent issue for our region.

Sincerely,



JOE COURTNEY  
Member of Congress



SHELDON WHITEHOUSE  
United States Senate



CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY  
United States Senate



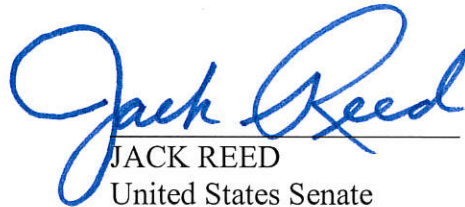
JOHN B. LARSON  
Member of Congress



JIM HIMES  
Member of Congress



JAHANA HAYES  
Member of Congress



JACK REED  
United States Senate



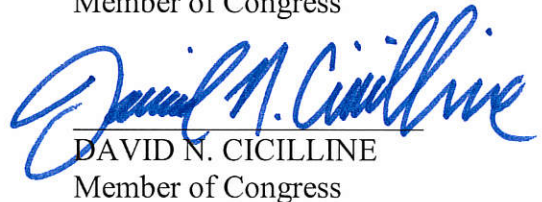
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United States Senate



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DAVID N. CICILLINE  
Member of Congress