

United States Senate

November 7, 2023

The Honorable Shalanda D. Young
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Michael L. Connor
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Director Young and Assistant Secretary Connor,

We appreciate the Administration's September 20, 2023, announcement making funding available for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) new loan program for non-Federal dam safety projects, the Corps Water Infrastructure Financing Program (CWIFP).

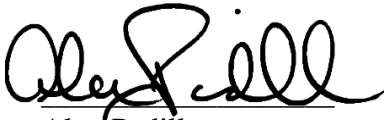
As you know, CWIFP was authorized by the "Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act" (WIFIA) and signed into law on June 10, 2014 as part of the *Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014*. Congress provided appropriations to USACE in December 2020, however we are concerned about the impact to important dam safety work of the nearly three-year delay in making this funding available. Additionally, we are concerned about the impact of similar delays to projects such as non-federal levees, which could be eligible for future WIFIA financing.

Congress created WIFIA to provide a new tool to leverage limited Federal resources, stimulate additional investment in our Nation's water resources infrastructure, and support local water resources projects. Since its creation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has closed more than one hundred loans totaling \$17 billion, resulting in \$5 billion in savings to borrowers, the creation of thousands of jobs, and billions in water infrastructure projects. To ensure CWIFP sees similar success, we ask that you commit to review loan applications under the same timelines as the EPA's parallel WIFIA program, which is under an identical statutory framework.

Under EPA's WIFIA program, the administration reviews most letters of intent for loans within two weeks, and provides final loan approvals within four to six weeks. We believe these time frames would be reasonable for most loans financed through the Corps' WIFIA program as well. We understand that reviews may take longer in a minority of cases where the administration is investigating whether the project involves a federal asset.

We thank you for your work on this vital program, and ask for your help to get the program moving by setting up a more timely and predictable review process for Corps WIFIA loans under CWFIP. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
United State Senator



John Hoeven
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United State Senator



Deb Fischer
United States Senator