United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 9, 2015

The Honorable Shaun Donovan
Director
U.S. Office of Management and Budget
301 G Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Director Donovan:

We write to urge the Office of Management and Budget to expeditiously approve the reprograming request submitted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that will fund an Economic Reevaluation Report for replacing the Davis and Sabin Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan (Soo Locks).

The Soo Locks, which consists of four parallel locks, is crucial to the safe and efficient transport of approximately 10,000 vessels that carry 80 million tons of cargo annually through the Great Lakes / St. Lawrence Seaway System. Currently, 70% of the cargo that transits the Soo Locks must utilize the Poe Lock due to size restrictions. The Davis Lock constructed in 1918 and the Sabin Lock built a year later are no longer capable of handling vessel traffic.

An unscheduled outage at the Poe Lock would stop the passage of large vessels carrying commodities critical to our national security and our regional and national economies. A 30-day unscheduled outage at the Poe Lock would result in an estimated $160 million in economic loses. The Report will examine the benefits and costs of replacing the Davis and Sabin Locks with a new lock capable of accommodating these ships and creating the redundancy necessary to ensure reliable commerce through the Great Lakes.

The pending reprogramming request is a critical step in the consideration of this important project, and we urge OMB to approve the funding transfer in a timely manner.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator

GARY PETERS
United States Senator