



July 17, 2009

The Honorable James Oberstar
Chairman
House Transportation and
Infrastructure Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Mica
Ranking Member
House Transportation and
Infrastructure Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

In 2007, with your leadership Congress passed the Water Resources Development Act. As you well know, one of the contentious issues that delayed the bill for some time was the provision requiring the Assistant Secretary of the Army to revise the Principles & Guidelines that govern the planning of water resources projects. As enacted into law, Section 2031 of that legislation requires the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works to revise the P&G in order to attain specific objectives that are spelled out in that section.

The Water Resources Coalition has been concerned about the progress of implementing this provision. A draft of revised Principles was published in the Federal Register last fall. The Coalition and several of its members provided comments on this proposal. However, nothing more has been heard from the Corps of Engineers on this subject.

On July 1, 2009, the Council on Environmental Quality issued a Notice requesting comments and suggestions on the 1983 Principles & Guidelines as well as noting the Administration's desire to expand the P&G "government-wide." CEQ held a webinar to explain what it was doing and answer questions. All comments were due July 17th.

The Coalition has expressed its concerns to CEQ about the process, including whether CEQ has the authority to take over the responsibility of leading the executive branch efforts to revise the P&G. The process being used by CEQ is also anything but transparent. While CEQ says it is merely using the process that was used in 1983 to develop the current P&G, the fact is that there is much that has changed in our society and in our government since that year. We believe the process should be transparent

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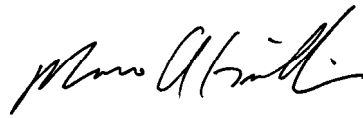
and inclusive of the many stakeholders who will be affected by the changes, some of whom probably have no idea that they will be impacted.

While our views are discussed in the enclosed letter to CEQ, we believe that it is far more important for the Committee to exercise its oversight over the process. Therefore, we respectfully request the Committee to hold a hearing on the implementation of Section 2031 of WRDA 2007 after the August recess. The Coalition is happy to offer its assistance to the Committee and its staff.

Sincerely,



Brian Pallasch
Co-Chairman
American Society of Civil Engineers



Marco Giamberardino
Co-Chairman
Associated General Contractors