Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 8, 2011

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
U.S. Department of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Room 3E446
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Ms. Darcy:

The Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) fiscal year 2011 budget included $160,000 for engineering and design to get a much-needed navigation project on the Nanticoke River "dredge ready." Unfortunately after the continuing resolution negotiation only $49,900 remained for that project.

The Nanticoke River, which runs from central Delaware through Sussex County to the Chesapeake Bay, is a major commerce transportation artery. It was last dredged in 1990 and since then has shoaled to depth of just eight feet in many areas, making it navigable only if barges are half empty. This adds expense to fragile industries like manufacturing, construction and poultry that will be recovering from the recession for years to come. The silted navigation channel also adds to air pollution. A full barge takes 150 tractor trailers off the road improving air quality and reducing wear and tear on highways.

We are writing to urge you to include the remaining $110,010 needed to complete engineering and design for this project in the Corps Baltimore District's FY12 budget. This initiative is a high priority for the communities in Sussex County, Delaware, and especially critical to the continuation of business and commerce via the Nanticoke River. Sussex County has purchased land for disposal of the dredge material, and that site has been approved by the Corps for that use. We appreciate how difficult it is to stretch dollars to cover every worthwhile project. However, this project has clear, measurable benefits for both the economy and environment of Delaware.

We support this project and we would greatly appreciate any further consideration. Should you have any questions we can be reached through our respective staff members, Mr. Josh Magarik in Senator Carper's office at (302) 573-6291, Ms. Latisha Bracy in Senator Coon's office at (302) 573-6345, and Ms. Molly Magarik in Congressman Carney's office at (302) 428-1902.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

John C. Carney, Jr.
Member of Congress