

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 24, 2012

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
108 Army Pentagon, Room 3E446
Washington DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy,

As Members of Congress who represent areas that include a large amount of agriculture interests and farms, we wanted to reach out to you regarding an issue that some of our local farmers have been having with the Army Corps of Engineers.

While we certainly support ensuring that levees in our district are safe and structurally sound, we are concerned that the Army Corps of Engineers is enforcing a standard that places a significant burden on farmers, while providing minimal improvement on levee durability.

As part of the PL-84-99 levee inspection process, we understand that the Corps has been requiring a 15 foot buffer zone between the base of a levee and row crops such as corn and soybeans. As you know, levee districts can stretch on for tens and hundreds of miles. This 15 foot buffer can cause financial hardship since farmers are unable to grow crops on land that they own. Farmers are also concerned that such a wide buffer could invite the drivers and trespassers onto the property who operate vehicles and create ruts in the ground during wet conditions.

We appreciate your attention to this matter, and look forward to your response.

Respectfully,



Aaron Schock
Member of Congress



Bobby Schilling
Member of Congress



Collin Peterson
Member of Congress