

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 1, 2021

The Honorable John Whitley
Acting Secretary of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 22202

Dear Acting Secretary Whitley:

We write to express significant concern about the decision by the St. Paul District of the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to continue to push for full disposal of the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam. We urge you to collaborate closely with the City of Minneapolis on a timeline and process which will facilitate the partial disposition and conveyance of the property at the Upper Lock, as directed in Section 356 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020, within the next year.

On January 7, 2021, the Corps issued a public statement accompanying the release of the draft disposition study for the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam which states in part that *“WRDA 2020 does not change the Corps’ recommendation for complete disposal of the federal project at Upper St. Anthony Falls nor its obligation to complete the disposition study.”*

Section 356 of WRDA 2020 – which was signed into law on December 27, 2020 - requires the Secretary of the Army to convey the real property at the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam to the City of Minneapolis, Minnesota, or its designee “as soon as practicable.” The same section envisions the Corps continuing to operate and maintain the Upper St. Anthony Falls lock under its existing authority.

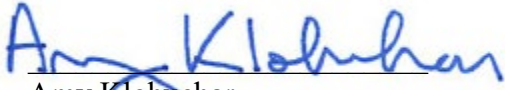
The Corps is seeking to improperly bundle the entire federal project into one land conveyance despite Federal law requiring the expedited transfer of part of the real property to the City of Minneapolis or its designee. We are frustrated that the St. Paul District has taken this position not only because full disposition is inconsistent with the expedited conveyance in Section 356, but also because it has been advised of Congressional intent in this matter previously.

A January 8, 2019, letter to the Corps from Senators Klobuchar and Smith stated the expectation that, *“the Corps would cooperate with the City of Minneapolis to develop a plan in which the Corps would continue to own, operate and maintain the Upper Lock for flood control and water supply management and divest to the City a portion of the real property surrounding the Upper Lock.”* Our commitment to this goal is unchanged.

The draft disposition study has already identified all the components of the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam which are compatible for a partial disposition, making expedited conveyance possible. We urge the Corps to collaborate closely with the City of Minneapolis on a timeline and process which will facilitate the partial disposal and conveyance of the property at the Upper Lock within the next year, consistent with Section 356.

We look forward to a prompt response, and expeditious transfer of the identified real property.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Angie Craig
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Dean Phillips
Member of Congress