

Statement of Mary Ann Bucci  
Executive Director, Port of Pittsburgh Commission  
before the  
Senate Transportation Committee  
June 18, 2024

Chairman Langerholc and members of the committees, I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

I am the Executive Director of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission. In order to create jobs and improve the quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania, it is the mission of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission to promote the commercial use and development of the inland waterway, intermodal transportation system and to integrate that system into the economic, recreational, environmental, and intermodal future of the resident and industries in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Our waterways are the lifeblood of the region's economy. They encompass two hundred miles of navigable waterways and include 17 locks and dams through which approximately 16 million tons of freight traffic, valued over \$2 billion per year must pass. This waterway network directly reaches no less than 13 Pennsylvania counties and supports 76,500 jobs and \$11.3 billion in

gross state product, \$5.5 billion in personal income, 25.6 billion in total output giving rise to \$1.1 billion in state and local tax revenue.

U.S. Steel's Clairton Plant on the Monongahela River is entirely dependent on barge transportation for its raw material. It brings in five million tons of metallurgical coal annually for the production of coke.

Heartland Fabrication LLC offers Marine services (barge construction and repairs), Metal Processing (blasting, priming, cutting, and bending), and Coatings (painting large structures to exact specifications). They have invested \$35 million in upgrading equipment and facilities and continue in their facility. Heartland Fabrication employs two hundred people.

Another waterway-supported industry related to energy is hydropower.

There are four operating hydropower plants on dams on the Allegheny River in the Port of Pittsburgh, generating a total of forty-two megawatts, and another plant is under construction.

All of this is dependent on the reliable navigation of our rivers, just as commerce everywhere else throughout the country is dependent upon adequate roads and railway networks. The inland waterway system is vital to Pennsylvania's energy future and to its continued economic development.

Our rivers are unique in their own way. The Monongahela River will have a ribbon cutting summer for the John P. Murtha Lock and Dam (previously call the Charleroi Lock and Dam) this summers. The project call the Lower Mon

Project has been 30 years in the works. The original project was two new lock chambers at Charleroi, a modification to raise a railroad bridge owned by the NS, new gates at Braddock Dam, and the removal; of Elizabeth Lock and Dam, creating a larger pool between Charleroi and Braddock. The Elizabeth Dam is expected to be breached on or about July 10, 2024, The project is coming in under delivered with only one lock chamber and the elimination of the rail road bridge. Final cost we be \$1.2 billion.

The next Mega project on the river is the Upper Ohio Project. This project replacing 360 foot chambers with 600 foot chambers. The locks involved are the Emsworth Locks & Dam; Dashields Locks & Dam; and, the Montgomery Lock & Dams. The work is beginning on the Mongomery Locks with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) contributing \$858 billion. Each lock location is estimated to take 8-10 year to complete.

The Allegheny River does not handle as much commercial traffic and because of the lack of commerical traffic, their locks have service reduction at their eight facilites. This hinders the recreation boat community. We have started a committee, Save the Allegheny River (STAR) to address these issues.

As your committees continue to consider transportation, we urge you to appreciate the conduit of the inland waterways and port system to Pennsylvania's competitiveness and growth. Investing in our ports,

terminals, and other related industries is an investment in Pennsylvania's economic prosperity because, coal, petroleum, steel chemicals, building materials and over 76,000 jobs are riding on our waterways transportation system in the Port of Pittsburgh Commission's region.

This concludes my testimony. Thank you for providing this opportunity to be here today to address this critically important subject.