

Rep. Miller Introduces Legislation to Support Levee Safety Along Mississippi River

Congresswoman Mary Miller (R-IL) introduced the *Upper Mississippi River Levee Safety Act* in the House on Tuesday. This legislation will give local levee districts along the Upper Mississippi River more flexibility to maintain their systems and allow them to better prepare for future floods, by addressing the federal regulatory challenges that make levee maintenance and improvements difficult.

“This bill is a critical step to ensure that levee operators have the tools and flexibility they need to do essential maintenance along the Mississippi River,” Miller said. “The Mississippi levees protect countless homes and thousands of acres of farmland, and I’m proud to lead the effort in the House to protect Illinois communities from future flood threats. I am pleased to be joined on this bill by several of my colleagues from the Illinois Delegation. We look forward to working with Chairman Sam Graves and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on this important issue, especially as the House begins work on the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) next year.”

This legislation is being co-sponsored by Rep. Eric Sorensen (D-IL), Mike Bost (R-IL), and Darin LaHood (R-IL).

“As the only meteorologist serving in Congress, I know how devastating the impacts of extreme weather can be to families, neighborhoods, and property,” said Sorensen. “I’m proud to work across the aisle to advance this bill that protects our region from the impacts of flooding along the Mississippi, supports our agriculture industry, and helps keep people safe.” - Rep. Eric Sorensen

“Farmers and families living along the Mississippi River know how devastating floods can be to our low-lying communities,” said Bost. “Oftentimes, our levees are all that stand between our people and the dangerous effects of a natural disaster. Investing in strengthening the levee system can truly be a matter of life and death. I am proud to support this legislation and will continue to do all I can to keep Southern Illinoisans safe.” - Rep. Mike Bost

“In central and northwestern Illinois, inland waterways are critical to the economic viability of our communities and allow small businesses, farmers and manufacturers to export commodities around the world,” said Rep. LaHood. “I am proud to join members of the Illinois Delegation to introduce this important legislation to improve levee operations along the Upper Mississippi River and provide local levee districts greater flexibility to maintain their systems.” - Rep. Darin LaHood

The *Upper Mississippi River Levee Safety Act* is also supported by the Upper Mississippi, Illinois & Missouri Rivers Association, the Illinois Farm Bureau, and Corn Belt Ports.

“Flooding in the Upper Mississippi River Valley has been a repeated occurrence for many years,” said Mike Klingner, Chairman of the Upper Mississippi, Illinois & Missouri Rivers Association (UMIMRA). “This legislation is critical for safeguarding the levees along the Upper Mississippi River. UMIMRA applauds Congresswoman Miller for spearheading one of the most pivotal initiatives in the past three decades to reduce potential future flood-related damages. We are urging the Senators in Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa to introduce similar bi-partisan legislation in the Senate.” - Mike Klingner, Chairman of UMIMRA

“Illinois Farm Bureau greatly appreciates Rep. Miller’s leadership on this effort,” said ILFB President Richard Guebert Jr. “Congresswoman Miller recognizes that our waterway infrastructure requires continued investment in upgrades and maintenance if we are to maintain our competitive advantage in global trade.” - Robert Guebert Jr., President of ILFB