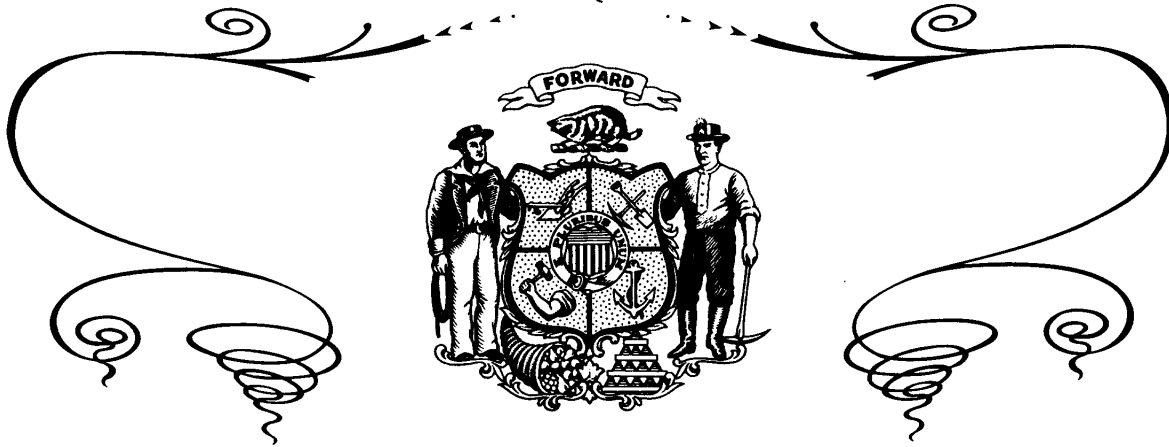


State of Wisconsin



2001 Assembly Resolution 56

ENGROSSED RESOLUTION

Relating to: urging authorization of funding for modernization of lock and dam infrastructure on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers' Inland Waterways Transportation System.

Whereas, the state of Wisconsin borders or contains over 360 miles of the upper Mississippi River and 11 navigation locks and dams along those borders; and

Whereas, many of Wisconsin's locks and dams are more than 60 years old and only 600 feet long, making them unable to accommodate modern barge tows of 1,200 feet long, nearly tripling locking times and causing lengthy delays and ultimately increasing shipping costs; and

Whereas, the use of 1,200-foot locks has been proven nationwide as the best method of improving efficiency, reducing congestion, and modernizing the inland waterways; and

Whereas, the construction of the lock and dam system has spurred economic growth and a higher standard of living in the Mississippi and Illinois river basin, and today supplies more than 300,000,000 tons of the nation's cargo, supporting more than 400,000 jobs, including 90,000 in manufacturing; and

Whereas, more than 60% of American agricultural exports, including corn, wheat, and soybeans, are shipped down the Mississippi and Illinois rivers on the way to foreign markets; and

Whereas, Wisconsin farmers, producers, and consumers rely on efficient transportation to remain competitive in a global economy, and efficiencies in river transport offset higher production costs compared to those incurred by foreign competitors; and

Whereas, the upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers lock and dam system saves our nation more than \$1.5 billion in higher transportation costs each year, and failing to construct 1,200-foot locks will cause farmers to use more expensive alternative modes of transportation, including trucks and trains; and

Whereas, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, congestion along the upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers is costing Wisconsin and other producers and consumers in the basin \$98,000,000 per year in higher transportation costs; and

Whereas, river transportation is the most environmentally friendly form of transporting goods and commodities, creating almost no noise pollution and emitting 35% to 60% fewer pollutants than either trucks or trains, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and

Whereas, moving away from river transport would add millions of trucks and railcars to our nation's infrastructure, adding air pollution, traffic congestion, and greater wear and tear on highways; and

Whereas, backwater lakes created by the lock and dam system provide breeding grounds for migratory waterfowl and fish; and

Whereas, the lakes and 500 miles of wildlife refuge also support a one-billion-dollar per year recreational industry, including hunting, fishing, and tourism jobs; and

Whereas, upgrading the system of locks and dams on the upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers will provide 3,000 construction and related jobs over a 15-year to 20-year period; and

Whereas, in 1999 the state of Wisconsin shipped 1,100,000 tons of commodities, including grain, coal, chemicals, aggregates, and other products; and

Whereas, 3,900,000 tons of commodities, including grain, coal, chemicals, aggregates, and other products, were shipped to, from, and within Wisconsin by barge, representing \$313,000,000 in value; and

Whereas, shippers moving by barge in Wisconsin realized a savings of approximately \$40,000,000 compared to other transportation modes; and

Whereas, Wisconsin docks shipped products by barge to 6 states and received products from 11 states; and

Whereas, there are approximately 20 manufacturing facilities, terminals, and docks on the waterways of Wisconsin, representing thousands of jobs in the state; and

Whereas, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is conducting a collaborative navigation study of the economic and environmental factors to be considered when examining capital improvements to the upper Mississippi River system; and

Whereas, the navigation study will release initial results in a summer 2002 report; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the assembly, That the Wisconsin assembly formally recognizes the upper Mississippi River as a river of statewide significance for natural, navigational, and recreational benefits; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Wisconsin assembly recognizes the importance of timely modernization of the inland waterway transportation infrastructure to Wisconsin agriculture and industry in this state, the region, and the nation and, pending results of the navigation study, urges Congress to authorize funding to construct 1,200-foot locks on the upper Mississippi and Illinois river system; and, be it further

Resolved, That the assembly chief clerk shall transmit copies of this resolution to the president and secretary of the U.S. senate, the speaker and clerk of the U.S. house of representatives, the chair of the senate committee on commerce, science, and transportation, the chair of the house committee on transportation and infrastructure, and the members of the congressional delegation from this state.

State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin

Representative Scott R. Jensen
Speaker of the Assembly

Date

John A. Scocos
Assembly Chief Clerk