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Subject: Rep. Poe OpEd
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To: Randall Reese rreese@navigationdistrict.org



Hi, Randall:

I hope you've been well. It's been some time since I last saw you. Congressman Poe placed an OpEd in the Houston Chronicle today on the importance of the Sabine Neches Waterway and the WRRDA bill. I've pasted it below and thought it would be of interest for you.

Kind regards,
Gina

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Poe: Widening of waterway will benefit economy

By U.S. Rep. Ted Poe | October 31, 2013 | Updated: October 31, 2013 7:10pm

As the dust settles from the government shutdown, the House has returned to work.

Next up: the Water Resources Reforms and Development Act.

Most Americans probably have no idea what the water resources proposal is because it does not make the mainstream media.

The legislation might not make for an eye-catching headline, but its passage will positively affect the economy nationwide, particularly in Texas. It passed the House on Oct. 23 with an overwhelming, nearly unanimous bipartisan vote.

This bill will now go to conference with the Senate, and then hopefully soon after to President [Barack Obama](#)'s desk.

This is the way Washington should function. In the wake of a Washington war, this was a welcomed victory for America and for Texas.

Texas is one of the largest maritime states in the nation and the No. 1 exporter nationwide.

Waterways and ports provide more than 200,000 jobs statewide and contribute \$34 billion to our economy. Though these numbers are impressive, much of the potential benefit of Texas ports and waterways has gone untapped.

Improving ports and waterways will ensure that Texas continues to be the nation's dominant export state.

We need to be forward-looking and the federal government must help, not hinder, the process of preparing for the future.

Unfortunately, that has not been the case.

As with all other things, "delay" has been the name of the game in Washington, hindering economic growth in Texas and all around the nation.

The Constitution charges Congress with the responsibility of promoting interstate commerce.

Historically, Congress has fulfilled this duty.

But, as the federal government has grown, so has federal bureaucracy.

Many projects included in the water resources bill have faced years of unnecessary and costly delay and red tape.

One of those stalled projects is right here in Southeast Texas - making navigation improvements to the Sabine-Neches Waterway.

What does Texas have to gain from this?

First, the widening and deepening of the Sabine will generate even greater exporting capabilities for Texas.

The deepening will increase depth from 40 to 48 feet, with widening and anchorages in places to allow deeper draft vessels.

Larger vessels will lead to greater exporting capabilities.

Currently, many ships are forced to come in less than full so they don't get stuck.

This expanded capacity will only grow when the Panama Canal expansion opens and larger ships begin to come through and head for our Gulf Coast ports.

Failure to widen and deepen the Sabine creates a giant missed opportunity for the Texas economy. This does not have to be.

The Sabine-Neches Waterway widening and deepening will also increase our nation's energy capabilities.

The waterway is lined with refineries.

Currently, the Sabine pipelines deliver around 15 percent (more than 3 million barrels) of all of the refined crude oil products east of the Rocky Mountains on a daily basis.

The Sabine also is vital to America's military.

It is home to the largest commercial military outload port in America based on tonnage, and it is the second-largest in the world.

The channel is home to two designated military strategic seaports: Beaumont and Port Arthur. Additionally, approximately 20 to 30 percent of America's commercial jet fuel and a significant majority and classified amount of our military's jet fuel is produced on the waterway.

We cannot afford to stand idly by while other nations such as China continue to aggressively grow their economy.

The Sabine Neches project is one of many included in the Water Resources Reforms and Development Act that will increase our global competitiveness, create jobs and positively affect the economy nationwide.

It is time to get moving and for Washington to pass that bill. Or else, the United States will simply be the superpower of the past.

Ted Poe, a Republican, represents Houston in the [U.S. House](#).