



J. Kevin Stitt
Office of the Governor
State of Oklahoma

July 5, 2019

The Honorable R. D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
108 Army Pentagon
Washington DC 20310

Lieutenant General Todd T. Semonite
Chief of Engineers and Commanding General
441 G Street NW
Washington DC 20314

Assistant Secretary James and Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite,

Throughout the months of April and May, the state of Oklahoma underwent devastating severe weather and flooding events. As a result of these conditions, state government declared a state of emergency for all 77 counties in Oklahoma, and the Trump administration was quick to respond both in its FEMA approvals as well as on the ground support from the Corps and a visit from the Vice President of the United States. Oklahoma greatly appreciates this administration's pro-active and close coordination during the events and your ongoing support as residents undergo a long road to recovery.

We specifically want to draw your attention to the historic flooding experienced in Eastern Oklahoma. This area was fortunate that the Tulsa-West Tulsa Levee System held back water for weeks, compared to the last major flooding event in 1986 that lasted less than a day. If these 75-year-old levees had been breached, the damage would have been catastrophic to the communities of hard-working Oklahomans protected by the levee system.

The 2018 Water Resources Development Act instructed your agency to conduct a Feasibility Study on our nation's levees, for completion by September 2020. Oklahomans simply cannot wait that long. In 2008, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rated the Tulsa-West Tulsa Levees as "unacceptable". Based on your own assessment, it is clear you, too, recognize the urgency for modernization and upgrades.

We are writing to request the Army Corps of Engineers to expedite the Feasibility Study for completion in December 2019. This will allow for much needed upgrades to be addressed before the close of the 116th Congress. Any deadline past December runs the risk of delaying the rebuilding and recovery process several years for this vital infrastructure.

The Tulsa-West Tulsa Levees provided protection to tens of thousands of Oklahomans, spanning from as north as Skiatook to as far south as Muskogee and Webbers Falls. These levees also protected \$2 billion in infrastructure and two major oil refineries, both of which provide gasoline to a large section of the mid-continental United States. The risks are too high for this not to be resolved soon, but there is a clear solution and path forward for expediting upgrades if the Corps will finalize this important report by the end of this year.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of J. Kevin Stitt in black ink.

J. Kevin Stitt
Governor of Oklahoma

Handwritten signature of G.T. Bynum in black ink.

G.T. Bynum
Mayor of Tulsa

Handwritten signature of Brian Guthrie in black ink.

Brian Guthrie
Mayor of Bixby

Handwritten signature of Robert Lee in black ink.

Robert Lee
Mayor of Jenks