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May 3, 2019

Brigadier General D. Peter Helmlinger
Commander, Northwestern Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 2870
Portland, Oregon 97208-2870

Dear General Helmlinger:

As you are aware, in March 2019, several states in the Missouri River Basin experienced severe flooding as a result of rapid snowmelt and intense rain storms. The flooding has caused at least \$3 billion in damages and more than 60 levees were breached or overtopped in the region. Since the onset of this flood event, we have been in constant contact with our constituents, local, state, and federal emergency response officials, and the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). The feedback we hear from folks on the ground and the information and insights provided by the Corps are invaluable as we consider ways to prevent or reduce the severity of future flood events.

In our discussions with constituents impacted by the March flooding, a lack of communication from the Corps was one of the most common complaints. Local levee sponsors, homeowners, businesses, farmers, and other stakeholders believe that advanced warning from the Corps—in the form of more frequent and informational communications—could have mitigated some of the damages. By the time most people in harm's way realized the gravity of the situation, it was too late to move grain, farm equipment, and other assets to safety.

Taking this feedback into consideration, we respectfully ask that within 30 days of receiving this letter, the Corps begins sending e-mail updates to all local sponsors of Corps levees in the Missouri River Basin. We request that these updates be sent weekly throughout the duration of flood season (January through June). These updates should include the following: snowpack levels, available flood control storage in the Missouri River Mainstem Reservoir System, cubic feet per second (cfs) release rates at the system's dams, flow rates in key tributaries such as the Niobrara, Nishnabotna, and Platte rivers, National Weather Service (NWS) precipitation forecasts, and the NWS spring flood outlook.

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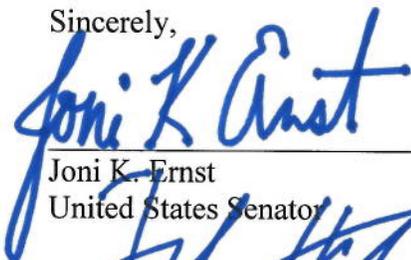
DAVENPORT OFFICE
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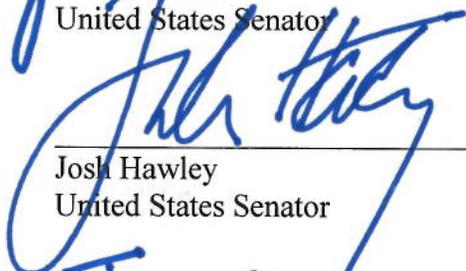
COUNCIL BLUFFS OFFICE
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COUNCIL BLUFFS, IA 51501
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The weekly updates should also include historical data from the 2011 and 2019 Missouri River floods that will serve as frames of reference for current data. Our hope is that these updates will help provide local levee sponsors and other stakeholders with the information they need to prepare for potential flood events. Thank you for your attention to this issue.

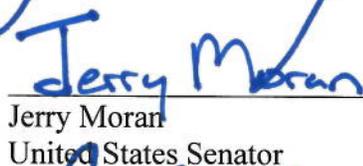
Sincerely,



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Josh Hawley
United States Senator



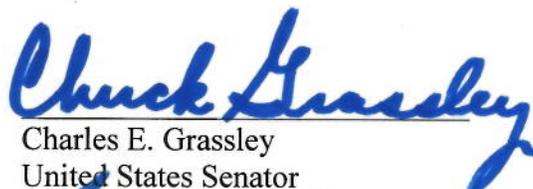
Jerry Moran
United States Senator



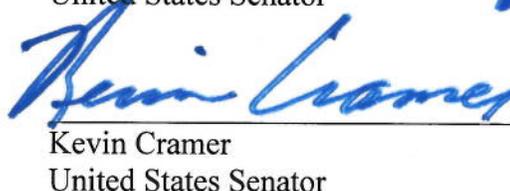
Roy Blunt
United States Senator



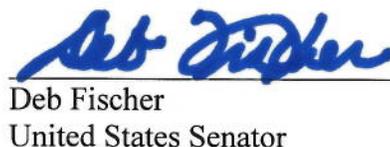
Ben Sasse
United States Senator



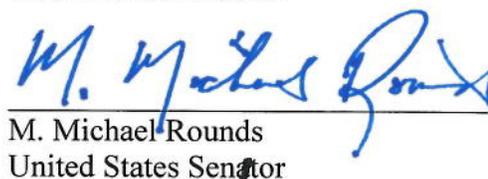
Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



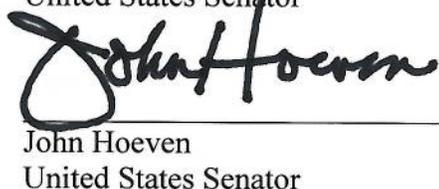
Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



Deb Fischer
United States Senator



M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



John Hoeven
United States Senator

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