



February 19, 2026

Rep. Tom Cole, Chair
Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Appropriations Committee
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Sen. Susan Collins, Chair
Sen. Patty Murray, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate
Appropriations Committee
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510-6025

Mike Simpson, Chair
Chellie Pingree, Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Interior and Environment
Appropriations Subcommittee
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Chair
Sen. Jeff Merkley, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate
Interior and Environment
Appropriations Subcommittee
S-125, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510-6025

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members of the Appropriations Committee and Interior and Environment Subcommittee:

As Congress develops its Fiscal Year 2027 appropriations priorities for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, I am writing on behalf of the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMRBA) to respectfully request \$25 million for the Gulf Hypoxia Program.

In FY 2027, the funding would support the implementation of state nutrient reduction strategies and modeling tools to understand the cumulative effects of these strategies on mitigating hypoxia.

UMRBA is the Governor-established forum for interstate water resource planning and management on the Upper Mississippi River, representing its member states of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin. UMRBA believes that the Gulf Hypoxia Program (and the Hypoxia Task Force) is a model of collaborative multi-state leadership, facilitating partnerships among states as well as between federal agencies, landowners, commodity groups, land-grant universities, conservation interests, and the private sector.

Through the Gulf Hypoxia Program (and Hypoxia Task Force), a partnership of 12 states, five federal agencies, and tribal partners work collaboratively to advance comprehensive water quality solutions designed to reduce nutrient loads in waterways throughout the greater Mississippi River Basin, consistent with the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan. Additionally, conservation practices to reduce nutrient runoff from nonpoint sources have many supplemental national benefits such as water storage capacity, sediment consolidation, and habitat for wildlife and pollinator species.

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651-224-2880
www.umrba.org

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We appreciate your consideration of this request. Please contact me at 651-224-2880 or kwallace@umrba.org to arrange an opportunity to discuss our request in more detail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "KWallace". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "W".

Kirsten Wallace
Executive Director
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

cc: Upper Mississippi River States Congressional Delegation
The Honorable Lee Zeldin, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Encl: December 2, 2025 Gulf Hypoxia Program Partner Support Letter

December 2, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair
The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate
Appropriations Committee
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510-6025

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Appropriations Committee
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair
The Honorable Jeff Merkley, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
S-125, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510-6025

The Honorable Mike Simpson, Chair
The Honorable Chellie Pingree, Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair and Ranking Member:

The undersigned organizations collectively represent a broad array of state governments and agricultural, navigation, and conservation interests, aligned in support of the Gulf Hypoxia Program, the Hypoxia Task Force partnership, and the states' nutrient reduction strategies. Together, we are writing to respectfully request ample funding in FY 2027 for the Gulf Hypoxia Program.

The Gulf Hypoxia Program advances the implementation of nutrient reduction solutions, including the construction of conservation projects, monitoring, and additional strategic planning. The state nutrient reduction strategies are used to inform the allocation of investments. Because of the extensive involvement of farmers, municipalities, conservation interests, and scientists, we are pleased to convey our shared position that the state nutrient reduction strategies provide the optimal approaches for allocating the Gulf Hypoxia Program resources in the best interests of the nation.

The undersigned organizations believe that the state nutrient reduction strategies are designed to improve the health, function, and viability of the Mississippi River basin's waterbodies. While important strides in conservation practices and point and nonpoint source loading reductions have been achieved over the past two decades, attaining the goals we have collectively set for reducing nutrient loading through the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan will require acceleration of its implementation.

The Gulf Hypoxia Program supports collaborations among state governments, tribal governments, and agricultural, municipal, conservation, and other stakeholders, including through the Hypoxia Task Force. Together, the undersigned organizations believe that the Hypoxia Task Force's state-federal infrastructure allows for multi-disciplinary collaborations to generate comprehensive approaches for reducing nutrient runoff from nonpoint sources in ways that also have many supplemental national benefits such as waterways transportation reliability, water storage, and habitat.

We thank you for your consideration of our request and hope that you will support the Gulf Hypoxia Program as a priority in the FY 2027 interior appropriation measure.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Drainage Management Commission
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Farmland Trust
American Society of Agronomy
American Soybean Association
America's Watershed Initiative
Applied Ecological Institute, Inc.
Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Clean Wisconsin
Crop Science Society of America
Ducks Unlimited
Environmental Defenders of McHenry County
Freshwater Society
Friends of the Fox River
Friends of the Mississippi River
Green Lands Blue Waters
Heartland Co-Op
Illinois Environmental Council
Illinois Land Improvement Contractors Association
Illinois Soybean Growers
Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Indiana Sportsmen's Roundtable
Iowa Environmental Council
Iowa Farm Bureau Federation
Iowa Wildlife Federation
Izaak Walton League of America
Izaak Walton League of America – Bill Cook Chapter (Stevens Point, WI)
Izaak Walton League of America – Chapter 1 (Chicago, IL)
Izaak Walton League of America – Chapter 85 (Havana, IL)
Izaak Walton League of America – Des Plaines Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America – Geneseo Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America – Illinois Division
Izaak Walton League of America – Indiana Division
Izaak Walton League of America – Iowa Division
Izaak Walton League of America – Minnesota Division
Izaak Walton League of America – Nebraska Division
Izaak Walton League of America – Ohio Division
Izaak Walton League of America – Wisconsin Division
Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group
Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation
Minnesota Agricultural Water Resource Center
Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Corn Growers Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
National Wildlife Foundation
Ohio AgriBusiness Association

Ohio Corn and Wheat Growers Association
Ohio Pork Council
One Mississippi
Prairie State Conservation Coalition
River Action
Soil and Water Conservation Society
Soil Science Society of America
The Fertilizer Institute
The Nature Conservancy
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
The Water Collaborative of Greater New Orleans
Trout Unlimited
Tulane ByWater Institute
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
United Egg Producers

cc: The Honorable Russell Vought, Director, Office of Management and Budget
The Honorable Lee Zeldin, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency