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Akin Speaks on House Floor to Oppose Cuts in Lock Funding Vital to Mississippi, Missouri Rivers

Congressman cites importance to regional economy

St. Louis, MO. - Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO) today spoke on the house floor against an amendment which would have placed additional requirements for the funding of lock construction on the Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway.

The Flake-Blumenauer amendment, which was subsequently defeated by the House of Representatives threatened to cut funding to seven lock on the Mississippi River despite the fact that barge operators have been paying a 20 cent per gallon fuel tax.

“Currently the upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway has provided 40 percent of the revenue to the Inland Waterway Trust Fund, of which it receives merely 15 percent of the distributions,” said Akin. “What the barge operators have been paying is a user tax, and it is only right that those funds are used to maintain the navigation system.”

Congressman Akin also noted the economic importance of maintaining reliable and efficient navigation system by noting that in any given year, 1 billion bushels of grain are moved to world ports via the Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway.