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Congress of the United States House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT

June 14, 2018

Hon. David H. Mortimer
President
Palisades Interstate Park Commission
P.O. Box 155
Alpine, New Jersey 07620

Dear President Mortimer:

Several weeks ago, the Palisades Interstate Park Commission announced a proposal to decommission the dam at Tillson Lake due to the high repair costs associated with avoiding a failure at the dam. Following this announcement, I have received numerous letters and phone calls from residents living near Tillson Lake, advocating for the preservation and restoration of this dam.

While I understand the cost to repair the dam will be approximately \$8 million, the Commission should make every effort to obtain the necessary financing to preserve this vital community asset. Since the dam was constructed in the 1930s, many families have built their lives and homes around Tillson Lake, bolstering property values in the area. Many residents, who view the dam as a permeant feature of the community, are surprised to see a proposal that would so radically and fundamentally alter the area.

Given the importance of the lake to southern Ulster County, it is unacceptable that the dam's upkeep has been neglected to the extent that demolition is now viewed as the only option. The Commission and New York should have made adequate maintenance plans for the dam years before the situation deteriorated to this point.

If the Tillson Lake dam is removed, it will mean the end of an important recreation spot and a decrease of real estate values for many residents in the surrounding area. The residents of Gardiner and southern Ulster County do not deserve to have their lives so unexpectedly impacted by an issue that ought to have been attended to and resolved by the Commission.

I trust that we can work together to resolve this funding issue and preserve Tillson Lake for future generations.

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KINGSTON DISTRICT OFFICE
721 BROADWAY
KINGSTON, NY 12401
PHONE: (845) 514-2322

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Faso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being the most prominent.

John J. Faso
Member of Congress

cc: Hon. Basil Seggos – New York State DEC
Hon. Michael Hein – Ulster County Executive
Hon. Kenneth Ronk – Chairman, Ulster County Legislature
Hon. Tracey A. Bartels – Ulster County Legislator, District No. 16
Hon. Marybeth Majestic – Town Supervisor, Town of Gardiner