



CITY OF METROPOLIS

BILLY McDANIEL, MAYOR

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July 26, 2016

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

As the Mayor of the City of Metropolis, a city in southern Illinois that sits on the Ohio River just upstream from its confluence with the Mississippi River, I write to voice my opposition to the St. John's New Madrid project, and to enlist your help in saving our city and others like it in Illinois, Missouri, and Kentucky from devastating floods like the flood of 2011.

The City of Metropolis suffered devastating losses in 2011 due to the delay in the activation of the New Madrid Floodway. Flood waters that inundated the City prior to the breaching of the Birds Point Levee impacted 239 homes. Over a dozen businesses located in Metropolis were either closed or had their operations affected by high water. In addition to the loss of revenue to our local and spin-off businesses, the loss to the City alone was in excess of \$320,000. When flood fighting and clean-up costs are added, the economic impact to the City approached \$1.4 million dollars.

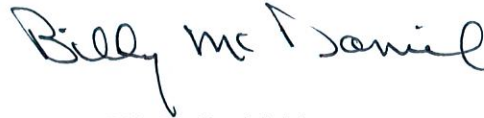
If the Army Corps of Engineers had failed to activate it entirely, over 2,100 homes would have been flooded, almost 5,000 residents would have been displaced, the waste water treatment plant would have been non-operational, both electrical substations that provide power to the City would have been under water, and there would have been no routes in to or out of the City of Metropolis to replenish food, fuel, and emergency services. Based on that information, I had no choice but to issue a voluntary evacuation order for the residents of the City of Metropolis. The cost of replacing these homes, businesses, and infrastructure would be in the tens of millions of dollars. We fear the construction of the New Madrid Levee will cause similar delays in activation or an outright refusal to activate, with catastrophic results for Metropolis.

Of the 6,334 residents of Metropolis, 23.5% have income below the poverty level. Placing our residents at greater risk of harm and loss, the project would do a great injustice to disadvantaged communities already harmed by unnecessary flooding.

I understand that the opponents of this project are many and the supporters are few. The environmental justice implications of the project are real and they are significant. The \$165 million price tag on this project would amount to a huge tax payer subsidy for a small number of landowners at the expense of the lives and livelihoods of thousands. The Obama Administration cannot stand by while this project

goes forward. We need to put an end to this ill-conceived idea and to stop the project once-and-for-all. For the people of Metropolis, I call upon EPA to exercise its authority under Section 404 (c) of the Clean Water Act and veto the St John's Bayou and New Madrid Floodway Project.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Billy McDaniel in cursive.

Billy McDaniel, Mayor
City of Metropolis, Illinois

Home of Superman

cc: The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator, United States Environmental Protection Agency

The Honorable Sally Jewel
Secretary, United States Department of Interior

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)

The Honorable Daniel Ashe
Director, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Christy Goldfuss
Managing Director, The White House Council on Environmental Quality