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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

TODD ROKITA
4TH DISTRICT, INDIANA

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

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AND THE WORKFORCE

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September 3, 2014

Ms. Kathleen O'Leary
President of NIPSCO
NiSource, Inc.
801 E. 86th Ave.
Merrillville, IN 46410

Delivered via email & US mail

Dear Ms. O'Leary,

I am writing to express my desire that the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) continue working to improve communication with residents around Lakes Freeman and Shafer.

I first want to thank NIPSCO for your responsiveness to my concerns regarding the issue that arose on August 1, 2014, due to the abnormally low flow of water in the Tippecanoe River. In particular, I appreciated your openness and willingness to work toward a long-term solution. I believe that the common-sense changes included in the Technical Assistance Letter (TAL) will reduce the likelihood of future, dramatic reductions to the water levels along the river. To further protect the community along Lakes Freeman and Shafer, I want to continue working with NIPSCO to ensure the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission operating license is amended to include the approach outlined in the TAL.

Apart from the TAL, I also believe we must continue working on more effective ways to communicate with those who live, work, and play on the lakes. It is critical that residents are made aware of dramatic shifts in water levels as soon as possible, in order to mitigate economic damage and ensure safety to the greatest degree possible. To that end, I would appreciate if you could respond in writing to the following questions:

- What procedures does NIPSCO have in place for informing residents of changes in lake levels?
- Were these procedures followed when the levels on Lake Freeman dropped beginning on August 1, 2014? If not, why not?
- What changes will NIPSCO implement going forward to ensure that more residents along the lake are notified as soon as possible?
- What options are being considered to ensure that individuals living outside of the immediate area, but with property along the lakes, are informed of potential water emergencies on the lake?

- Specifically, has NIPSCO considered implementing a mass emailing, texting, or mobile application (app) option for residents to voluntarily sign up for real-time notifications about the lakes and/or dams?
- What other facts exist that are relevant to your ability to notify the community regarding lake levels that you feel the public should understand?

While the water levels have returned to normal on Lake Freeman, we must learn from what happened. As part of that learning process, I believe a closer examination of the notification policies to the local community is necessary. I intend to engage in this examination to ensure public notifications are appropriate and timely. I also believe that the power of technology should be utilized aggressively for situations like changing lake levels.

I appreciate your cooperation with this request and ask for a response to these questions prior to the stakeholder meeting on September 12, 2014. Thank you for your timely attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Todd Rokita
Member of Congress

TER/pt

Cc: Rebecca Sczudlo, Vice President of Federal Government Relations, NiSource

Cc: Nick Meyer, Director of External Communications, NIPSCO