

Serving Ohio River Basin on Capitol Hill

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U.S. Reps. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., and Steven Driehaus, D-Ohio, are to be commended for a plan to give our region more clout in Congress.

The two lawmakers announced this week that they are establishing a new group, the Ohio River Congressional Caucus. It will address issues affecting the millions of Americans in the Ohio River Basin, which includes parts of 14 states. Many of the basin's counties are in West Virginia and Ohio.

Frankly, we doubt that the bipartisan caucus will accomplish many major coups at first. But if Capito and Driehaus can convince members of Congress representing all counties in the basin to participate, the caucus should be able to develop real clout. It should be particularly effective in addressing special concerns such as those involving water quality and industry. Obviously, it also will have some status in discussions over coal policy.

At a time when ultra-partisanship seems to be a way of life in Congress, Capito and Driehaus are attempting to build a coalition in which party affiliation is secondary to serving constituents.

We applaud the idea and encourage all members of Congress from Ohio River Basin states to participate in the caucus.