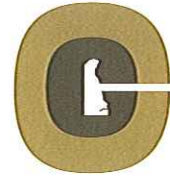


DELAWARE STATE
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Richard K. Struthers, Chairman
James A. Wolfe, President & CEO

October 16, 2009

The Honorable Jack Markell
Governor State of Delaware
Tatnall Building, Second Floor
150 William Penn Street
Dover, DE 19901



Dear Governor Markell:

This letter is to express the Delaware State Chamber's support to deepen the Delaware River main shipping channel from 40 to 45 feet. The timely completion of this project is critical to maintain and enhance the competitive position of the Port of Wilmington among other north and south Atlantic ports, all of which currently enjoy shipping channels that range in depth from 42 to 50 feet.

As you know, the mission of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce is to promote Delaware's business community. An essential part of that mission is support for a growing and prosperous economy that will create jobs. This mission is particularly important during these challenging economic times. We firmly believe that dredging the Delaware River Channel to the depth of 45 feet is a critical economic development project that will bring millions of dollars into Delaware's economy and will supply employment to hundreds of Delawareans.

The Port of Wilmington is an important economic engine to the State of Delaware and to the region as a whole. According to a 2006 study conducted by John Martin and Associates, the Port contributes \$500 million annually to the local economy, sustains 6,000 direct and indirect jobs, generates over \$212 million in total business revenues, and contributes over \$22 million in state and local taxes annually. Given that cargo vessels are growing in size, such as the new Post-Panamax container ships with drafts increasing from 41 to 50 feet, the 45' Delaware River Deepening Project is vital to protecting the current economic contribution the Port of Wilmington makes to the State of Delaware. Failure to complete this project will result in the erosion of these economic benefits as current shipping businesses divert to other east coast ports with deeper navigational channels.

Deepening the main shipping channel to 45 feet is the essential next step to expand the Port of Wilmington by constructing new ship berths on the Delaware River to supplement the existing berths on the Christina River. This expansion, particularly with the ongoing effort to improve the Panama Canal, will position the Port to compete for the diversion of Trans-Pacific trade from the west to the east coast of the U.S. It is my understanding there are private consortia which have indicated an interest in investing in this expansion – but only if the channel is deepened to 45 feet. This type of investment scenario is already in play at a number of ports along the east coast: the Maryland Port Administration has released Request for Qualifications for private investors to expand, lease and operate the Seagirt Marine Terminal; Center Pointe properties announced an unsolicited multi-billion bid to the Commonwealth of Virginia to

purchase the operating rights of the Virginia Port Authority's cargo terminals; and the Port of Charleston has placed a Request for Proposal for development of a major container terminal along the Cooper River. All of these ports enjoy shipping channel depths of 45 to 50 feet. Given the state of the current economy, opportunities are few and rare for massive blue collar economic development projects such as this. We therefore must seize upon the potential economic opportunity for growth at the Port of Wilmington.

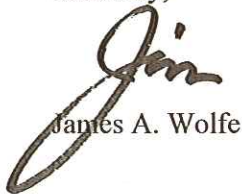
We are fully aware of the debate over the environmental impact of the 45' Delaware River Deepening Project; it should be noted that numerous scientific studies have been conducted over the past 20 years. These studies, conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act regulations and other applicable federal and state regulations and laws, indicate the project can be completed in an environmentally-sound manner. To ensure this, the Corps of Engineers will, in coordination with relevant state and federal regulatory agencies, constantly monitor the project through the pre-construction, construction and post-construction phases of the project.

In addition, there are other positive environmental impacts that will directly benefit the State of Delaware. Specifically, the State will receive sand for beach replenishment at Broadkill Beach, wetlands will be created at Kelly Island, and blasted rock removed from the channel could be used to create artificial fish reefs in the lower Delaware Bay.

It is our firm belief that this project will significantly benefit Delaware both economically and environmentally, and at no cost to the state. We look forward to working with your administration to advance this critical port infrastructure project.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



James A. Wolfe

cc: Gene Bailey
Alan Levin
Dennis Rochford