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

September 13, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

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Dear Secretary Chao:

I write in strong support of PhilaPort's application for \$30 million (M) in discretionary grant funds from the 2019 Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP).

PhilaPort is an independent agency of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania charged with the management, maintenance, marketing, and promotion of port facilities along the Delaware River in Pennsylvania, and with strategic planning throughout the greater port district. Port cargoes and the activities they generate are responsible for thousands of direct and indirect jobs in the Philadelphia area and throughout Pennsylvania.

According to the Inrix 2018 Global Traffic Scorecard, the Northeast is home to the nation's most congested cities. This congestion costs drivers approximately 150 lost hours each year. The maritime transportation system is a viable and underutilized alternative that can play an important role in enhancing the capacity and performance of this transportation system. The Southport Berth Development and Port Expansion project aims to contribute to the reduction of this landside congestion and stimulate the marine freight industry in the greater Philadelphia region.

PhilaPort is seeking these funds in order to provide gap funding for the development of a new \$80.5M multi-use berth to accommodate roll-on/roll off (Ro/Ro) and military vessels at Southport. The proposed berth will be capable of handling container vessels and support ship to shore cranes. The proposed PIDP project, coupled with the nearly complete deepening of the Delaware River shipping channel to accommodate post-Panamax vessels will allow vessels to dock directly at the re-developed Southport Terminal. Vehicular and military cargo can then be efficiently stored near the berth. It is more cost-effective for vessels to deliver directly to Philadelphia than to bypass this key metropolitan region and incur the added cost of trucking Philadelphia-bound cargo in from other ports. Additionally, by shifting the handling of imported automobiles from PhilaPort's Packer Avenue Marine Terminal (PAMT) to its Southport facility, the project will increase berth and storage capacity at PAMT and provide more berth availability to handle larger container ships.

This shovel-ready project will leverage \$52M in non-federal funding (63.4% of total cost) from PhilaPort. By completing environmental review in 2012, securing necessary permits in 2013, finishing conceptual planning in 2018, and investing an additional \$106M on other projects that

support existing vehicle storage operations, PhilaPort has demonstrated its commitment to this endeavor.

Thank you for your consideration of this application and my strong support for it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Dwight Evans', written over a horizontal line.

Dwight Evans
Member of Congress