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May 7, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing to express support for the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority's (PhilaPort) **Southport Wharf Development and Port Expansion** project. PhilaPort is requesting \$25 million in federal grant funding to construct a multi-use berth to accommodate roll-on/roll off (Ro/Ro) and military vessels. The goal of the project is to provide additional maritime capacity within the regional port system that is so vital to fostering regional and national economic growth in the years ahead.

The project would support the creation of hundreds of direct jobs in the port itself, as well as several thousand additional induced and indirect jobs, which will inject millions of dollars into the local economy. In addition to providing middle-class blue-collar jobs crucial to a region struggling with persistent poverty, a berth at the Southport facility would provide numerous efficiency and logistical benefits. These benefits include more efficient berthing operations, placing cargo in immediate proximity to the berth and processing center, and decreased potential for vehicle damage. Once completed, the berth will enable more efficient export vehicle opportunities as well as intermodal delivery via rail.

Funding awarded under the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) grant programs would support PhilaPort's efforts, in collaboration with its partners, to build a new berth adjacent to more than 160 acres of cargo storage. Successful development of this project would represent the first deep-water berth construction in Philadelphia in almost 50 years, leveraging the channel deepening of the Delaware River.

I respectfully request your full and consideration.

Sincerely,



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress