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FIRST DISTRICT OF GEORGIA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1001

September 5, 2019

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

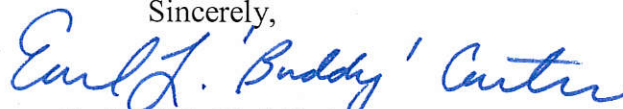
I am writing to express my strong support for the Georgia Ports Authority's (GPA) United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) grant application for the Container Berth 1-2-3 Upgrade project in Chatham County, Georgia.

The requested PIDP funding will modernize three container berths at the Port of Savannah to accommodate the larger 14,000 TEU vessels that are becoming the industry standard for ocean-bound ships calling at U.S. East Coast ports, improving the movement of containers through the Port of Savannah to and from major population centers across the nation. This is a project that has a regional and national impact by allowing international trade to grow, including an increasing volume of U.S. exports being handled at the Port of Savannah, while also delivering the efficiency, resiliency, and state of good repair improvements intended by the PIDP at one of the top coastal seaports in the U.S. The project will leverage other GPA improvement projects awarded Federal funding that are currently under way, such as the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP) and the innovative International Multi-Modal Connector, also known as the Mega Rail Yard, for additional economic benefit. By improving these three container berths so they can accommodate the largest ocean vessels calling on the U.S. East Coast, the GPA will continue to invest in the future of the U.S. economy.

Over the last fifteen consecutive years, Georgia Ports Authority has been the fastest growing port in the country. In calendar year 2018, container traffic at the Port of Savannah's Garden City Terminal grew 7.5% year over year and has grown 54% since 2010. The harbor in Savannah is currently being deepened to serve newer, larger vessels calling on the U.S. East Coast since the completion of the Panama Canal expansion in 2016. These vessels offer greater economies of scale to importers and exporters alike. The infrastructure improvements funded by this grant application and the Georgia Ports Authority will have significant positive implications for area and the nation.

I appreciate your time and thoughtful consideration for this grant. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress