



May 31, 2013

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

First, let us thank you for your thoughtful consideration of past TIGER grant requests from Delaware applicants. We greatly appreciate the time your entire TIGER team took to work with our colleagues in Delaware to ensure these proposals aligned with the goals of the TIGER program as closely as possible. Your support of the Newark Regional Rail Station, first through a planning grant with TIGER II funds, and then with a capital investment under TIGER IV, promises to bring important transportation and economic benefits to the Newark area, Delaware, and the entire region.

Today, we write in support of the TIGER V application submitted by the Diamond State Port Corporation (DSPC) for a \$10 million grant to fund vital repairs at the Port of Wilmington in Delaware. The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$13.4 million. The DSPC, which owns and operates the Port, will fund the remaining \$3.4 million.

The Port of Wilmington is critical to the entire region's economy. Wilmington is North America's No. 1 seaport for imports of fresh fruit, bananas, and juice concentrate, and it has the largest dock-side refrigerated complex in the United States. Based on a recent study by Martin Associates, the Port's operations are directly responsible for more than 4,700 jobs, and indirectly for about 13,800, annually, as well as \$360 million in revenue and \$34 million in state and local taxes.

Despite the enormous economic activity generated by the Port, it requires additional funding for significant capital projects like this one. This project will dramatically improve the utility, and extend the service life, of two berths – the value of which to a port operating seven hard berths cannot be overstated. Neither is currently able to operate at full capacity due to cargo carrying restrictions, and both are in danger of further significant deterioration.

Returning these berths to their full operational use will ensure that this regional economic driver continues uninterrupted – and the significant number of jobs tied to it remains

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steady which is why this project enjoys the strong support of the local International Longshoreman's Association membership.

Most importantly, the work on these berths is ready to begin immediately. The construction activity itself will generate 188 additional construction jobs in the region, \$13.4 million in construction revenue, and more than \$700,000 in local and state tax revenue - as well as \$1.3 million in federal taxes. The project also supports nearly 125 permanent jobs.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of this proposal. Should you or your staff have any questions, we can be reached through our respective staff members: Governor Markell through Missy Wier Banashak at (202) 624-7724, Senator Carper through Josh Magarik at (302) 573-6291, Senator Coons through Andrew Dinsmore at (302) 573-6345, and Congressman Carney through Cerron Cade at (302) 691-7333.

Sincerely,


Jack A. Markell Thomas R. Carper Christopher A. Coons John C. Carney, Jr.
Governor United States Senator United States Senator Member of Congress