



STATE OF DELAWARE  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
800 BAY ROAD  
P.O. BOX 778  
DOVER, DELAWARE 19903

SHAILEN P. BHATT  
SECRETARY

May 28, 2013

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

The Delaware Department of Transportation wishes to endorse the Port of Wilmington in its application to the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) V Discretionary Grant program. The Port of Wilmington serves a vital economic role for the greater Wilmington region by providing livable-wage jobs and delivering goods throughout the Northeast and beyond. The rehabilitation of its berths is a critical infrastructure issue needed to ensure the long term sustainability of the Port.

The Port of Wilmington is requesting \$10 million of a \$13.5 million project to rehabilitate a portion of the Port's berths necessary to bring it up to a state of good repair and add capacity to a growing enterprise. The berths along Wharf Unit No. 1, originally built in 1922 and last rehabilitated in 1977, have outlived their service life and are in critical condition for repairs. Loss of the berths due to neglect would impede traffic in the Port channels and significantly reduce the Port's economic viability. Funding for this project will ensure the future operation of the Port and improve its opportunities for growth. This project is consistent with the goals of the TIGER program: ensuring critical infrastructure investment, generating economic development for the region and preserving jobs for our economy.

The Port of Wilmington is the top-ranked North American port for fresh fruit imports and juice concentrate, and has one of the largest dockside cold-storage facilities in the United States. Each year, more than 1.5 million tons of bananas, pineapples, grapes, deciduous fruit out of Chile and Argentina, and citrus from Morocco are offloaded at the port. The Port is strategically located on the Northeast Corridor, with great connectivity to I-95 and I-495 and is served by two Class I railroads.

The Port is an economic engine for the State of Delaware and the surrounding region. The Port employs over 4,300 regional jobs and generates \$363 million in business revenue, \$340 million in annual personal income, and \$34 million in annual regional tax revenue.

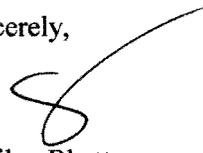


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As a member of the Delaware State Port Corporation's Board of Directors and as Secretary of Transportation, I fully support this application and respectfully request the funding of this important project for our region.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 302-760-2303. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shailen Bhatt', with a long, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Shailen Bhatt  
Secretary

SPB/ld  
cc: Gene Bailey, Delaware