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GARY L. SMITH JR.
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District 19

COMMITTEES:

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Insurance
Revenue and Fiscal Affairs
Transportation, Highways
and Public Works
Joint Legislative Committee
on Capital Outlay

May 7, 2020

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

**Re: Letter of Support/Port of South Louisiana
Greenfield Louisiana Project
FY 2020 BUILD Grant Program**

Dear Secretary Chao,

Thank you for your continued advocacy for our nation's transportation projects, including port infrastructure. I am writing on behalf of the Port of South Louisiana (POSL) to express my support for their FY 2020 BUILD Grant application.

The Port of South Louisiana is North America's largest tonnage port, serving as a crucial economic driver for the region and the nation. This past year the Port logged 303 million short tons of total throughput. The economic impact of the POSL for our state and region cannot be overstated. A recent economic impact study found that the combination of the POSL companies' capital spending and operational spending supported 41 percent of all personal income and 63 percent of all jobs in the region. The Port's continued growth and the vitality of the commerce it supports, however, hinges on improving and expanding its infrastructure.

The proposed **Port of South Louisiana Greenfield Louisiana Project** will construct a new grain terminal system and dock for the purposes of facilitating the movement of more agricultural goods from producers (U. S. farmers) within the rural local and regional area to end users throughout the world. The proposed project is expected to significantly enhance export trade at the port, particularly to Asia, Central America, Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

The project will employ innovative financing through a public private partnership of the Board of Commissioners of the POSL and long-standing investment and development firms that have successfully participated in previous capital improvements at the port. BUILD grant funds will be leveraged with private investment to optimize project financing.

I hope that you will consider the far reaching regional and national benefits of this project in considering this proposal. Many thanks for your time and careful consideration of this important proposal.

With kindest regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary L. Smith, Jr. / gcr".

Gary L. Smith, Jr.
State Senator
District 19