

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 30, 2012

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Secretary Darcy:

We are writing to respectfully request that you include Jacksonville Harbor's two ongoing navigation projects on the list of infrastructure projects of regional or national significance, as directed by President's Obama's Executive Order: Improving Performance of Federal Permitting and Review of Infrastructure Projects.

JAXPORT now accommodates 11 of the world's 15 largest container lines, including all - water container service to and from ports in Asia. The Port also continues in its historical role as the nation's second largest handler of automobiles and the number one trade partner with Puerto Rico. JAXPORT supports 65,000 jobs and generates a total of \$19 billion in annual economic impact.

As you know, the Chief of Engineers' report on the Mile Point project, Jacksonville, Harbor, was signed on April 30th, 2012. The Mile Point navigation restriction causes shipping inefficiencies and hazards for vessel movement throughout the entire federal harbor. Prompt remediation is essential to Jacksonville Port Authority's ability to continue to create jobs and grow the economy of Northeast Florida. Upon completion, the Mile Point project will result in the addition of 3550 jobs. The Army Corps' recommended plan of improvement is fully supported by the Port Authority. The Preconstruction, Engineering and Design (PED) is ongoing at this time.

JAXPORT is ideally situated to accommodate the mega sized ships requiring 48 to 50 feet of draft which are expected on the East Coast on completion of the Panama Canal expansion. Without additional East Coast deep draft capacity in place to accommodate these ships, the U.S. is at risk of losing jobs overseas, as vessels can call at foreign ports which already have 50 foot harbors such as Freeport, Bahamas. With a deeper draft, JAXPORT's post panama container terminal and future planned capacity additions will result in 90,000 jobs. Yet the ongoing General Reevaluation Report (GRR) is subject to cumbersome review and additional procedures resulting in delays and extended timelines for project completion. The GRR is now in its ninth year and the estimated time for completion has been extended to late 2014, with the final Chief of Engineers' report not scheduled for submittal to Congress until July 2016.

It is evident that JAXPORT's reach extends far beyond northeast Florida and that these navigation projects will result in significant regional and national benefit. Thank you in advance for designating these projects on the national priority list. Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

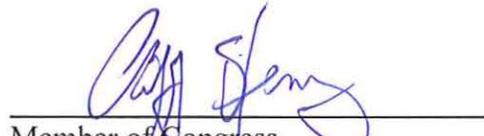
Sincerely,



Senator



Member of Congress



Member of Congress



Member of Congress