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September 17, 2013

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster,

On behalf of the Georgia Ports Authority, I am writing in full support of you, Ranking Member Rahall, and all of the Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for your work in moving forward with the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA). In our view, it is vital that the committee do its important work to move this legislation out of committee, through the House and into a conference with the Senate as soon as possible.

As you and your colleagues have so accurately stated, the failure of the Congress to enact a new water resources authorization bill since 2007 is severely weakening the ability of our deepwater and inland ports to do their job to support dynamic economic opportunities throughout the nation.

In Georgia, this delay has added great costs and extraordinary delay in moving the urgently needed deepening of the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP) forward to construction. This project to deepen the Savannah River channel from 42 feet to a new depth of 47 feet has the highest benefit-cost ratio of any pending major harbor construction project in the nation—every dollar invested would generate 5.5 dollars in benefits to the United States. It would provide an estimated annual net savings on shipping of \$174 million.

Mr. Chairman, we at the Georgia Ports Authority applaud your leadership and the determination of the committee to produce a bill that is fiscally sound, nationally effective, and which will unleash the full potential of our of ports to bolster economic opportunities for all of our citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Curtis J. Foltz".

Curtis J. Foltz
Executive Director

cc: Georgia Congressional Delegation

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+ Port of Savannah
+ Port of Brunswick