



May 23, 2024

Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Support for Alabama State Port Authority's Grant Application for CRSI Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Board of Directors for Partners for Environmental Progress (PEP), I am writing to express support for the Alabama Port Authority's (ASPA) grant request for its *TASD New Horizons Project* (or "the Project"). The ASPA is critical to commerce, and whether by river, rail, or road, the Port is committed to connecting our people, places, and businesses. With five Class I and four short-line railroads that touch Mobile, the Port's railroad, Terminal Railway Alabama State Docks, or TASD, conducts all switching operations for customers at the Port of Mobile.

With its application for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI) Program, the Project will support a safer and more efficient operational environment that will continue the Alabama Port Authority's commitment to sustainability through building more resilient infrastructure that operates with reduced emissions and increased reliability. This is an opportunity to contribute to economic growth, an enhanced environment, and job creation.

Proposed improvements include expanding the existing TASD interchange yard, raising it to protect it from storm events, and adding power switches. Once these proposed improvements are in place, the Port will study how the new infrastructure will impact the overall rail network around the Port of Mobile. With a deeper understanding of how growth around the Port should be accounted for and how this growth will influence TASD's daily switching operations, the Port will be able to better plan for the future with sustainability and efficiency in mind. The Port of Mobile's capabilities and connectivity make it an ideal gateway for all types of cargo, from coal and containers to forest products and steel, to automobiles and aggregates. The Port can handle import and export cargoes of virtually any type and volume. With deep water, modern equipment, and multimodal connectivity, Alabama's Port is one of the most efficient, productive, and accessible ports in the nation.

PEP is a coalition of business and education leaders who share the vision of applying science-based environmental best practices to business and community issues. Our 200 member companies, including ASPA, are chemical, steel, aerospace, and other manufacturers and the vendors, consultants, suppliers and service providers that serve them. PEP member companies value our unique natural resources and our economy.

PEP's member companies rely on the efficiency, capacity and accessibility of the Port to import raw materials and export their products in a timely and cost-effective method. PEP strongly supports this much-needed Project. The Project provides crucial improvements to a well-connected Port that, in 2022 alone, supported 351,359 jobs, or one out of every seven jobs in Alabama, and contributed \$98.3 billion in economic value statewide.

For these reasons, we thank you for your consideration of the Alabama Port Authority's application for federal CRISI grant funding to accelerate the construction of the *TASD New Horizons Project*.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Denson
Executive Director

A Clean Environment is Good for Business

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