

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 11, 2015

The Honorable Shaun Donovan
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street Northwest
Washington, District of Columbia 20503

Dear Director Donovan:

We write in strong support of funding for the Delaware River Main Channel Deepening Project and request its inclusion in the President's Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 or the US Army Corps of Engineers' FY 2016 Work Plan as appropriate. This critical infrastructure project aims to deepen the existing Delaware River navigation channel from 40 to 45 feet from the mouth of the Delaware Bay North to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Camden, New Jersey. As you know, this project plays a vital role in modernizing our national infrastructure, and we are grateful the significant federal investment to date underscores its importance. We've deeply appreciated your previous support for this project, and as it nears completion, it is imperative that it receive full funding in the President's Budget so that business in our region may begin to reap its economic benefits as soon as possible.

Due to robust funding in the FY 2015 Omnibus spending bill and the US Army Corps Work Plan for FY 2015, the critical rock blasting and removal phase proceeded as scheduled. With the upcoming completion of the expansion of the Panama Canal, we remain committed to ensuring that ports along the Delaware River are able to receive Post-Panamax vessels. Once this project is completed, it will help spur economic growth and create new jobs in our region. Currently, the project is nearing its final phases and with continued sufficient investment it could be completed by 2017. In addition to facilitating more efficient movement of goods, it is estimated that this deepening initiative would result in an annual increase of 2.5 million tons of cargo. This additional cargo would support and create tens of thousands of direct and indirect jobs in the region and catalyze the regional economy.

We strongly encourage you to include funding for the full capability level for the Delaware River Deepening Project in the President's Budget for FY 2017 or the Army Corps' FY 2016 Work Plan. Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your continued commitment to prioritize the modernization of ports along the East Coast. We deeply appreciate your past support and the considerable federal investment that has already been made to date. We look forward to continuing to work with you to bring this critical project to completion.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator