



FLORIDA SEAPORTS

CHARTING OUR FUTURE

Florida Ports Council

Canaveral Port Authority · Port Citrus · Port Everglades · Port of Fernandina · Port of Fort Pierce · Jacksonville Port Authority ·
Port of Key West · Manatee County Port Authority · PortMiami · Port of Palm Beach · Panama City Port Authority · Port of Pensacola ·
Port St. Joe Port Authority · Port of St. Petersburg · Tampa Port Authority
Doug Wheeler, President and CEO

October 23, 2013

Dear Florida Congressional Delegation Member:

As the House Water Resources Reform and Development Act heads to the House Floor for a vote today, the Florida Ports Council thanks you for your hard work and commitment to growing our economy and creating jobs through responsible water policy and investment.

The FPC represents Florida's 15 public seaports, which play a critical role in Florida and the nation's economy. Responsible for 680,000 direct and indirect jobs and \$96 billion in total economic value, these activities account for \$2.4 billion in state and local tax revenues. Florida's seaports are vital gateways for the growth of international commerce and are strategically positioned to accommodate much of the new trade heading to U.S.'s East Coast from Latin/Central America, as well as new opportunities due to the Panama Canal expansion.

The last time the U.S. Congress passed water resources legislation was in 2007. The last meaningful revisions to water resource and deep-draft navigation administrative rules were in 1986. This legislation is critical to the health of growing international commerce in the U.S.

In Florida, the state has attempted to adjust to this lack of federal authorization where possible. The lack of federal provisions has made it difficult to adequately prepare for future waterborne commerce opportunities not only in the U.S. but with our trading partners overseas. A failure to invest in the Nation's waterborne commerce infrastructure will impact our ability to recover adequately from any economic recession, and limit our ability to export U.S. based manufactured products.

When the Florida Ports Council traveled to Washington last month, we were honored to discuss these important issues with the Florida Congressional Delegation and want to thank you for the depth of knowledge and engagement on this legislation. Although not a perfect bill, this legislation goes a long way in addressing priority issues for Florida ports, such as the need to streamline the lengthy and cumbersome Corps approval processes, the release of harbor maintenance fees, and the authorization of federal funds for critical projects.

We are supportive of the amended version of WRRDA and look forward to a positive vote on the floor of the House today.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Doug Wheeler, President and CEO
Florida Ports Council