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| JAXPORT | July 9, 2019 | |
| Port Canaveral | The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio Chairman House Committee on Transportation and and Infrastructure 2134 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 | The Honorable Sam Graves Ranking Member House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure 1135 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 |
| Port Everglades | | |
| Port of Fernandina | The Honorable Grace F. Napolitano Chairwoman Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment 1610 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 | The Honorable Bruce Westerman Ranking Member Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment 209 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 |
| Port of Fort Pierce | | |

RE: Water Resource Development Acts

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| Port of Key West | Dear Chairman DeFazio, Chairwoman Napolitano, Ranking Member Graves and Ranking Member Westerman: |
| PortMiami | The Florida Ports Council represents Florida’s network of 15 deepwater seaports. Seaports are one of the state’s greatest economic assets, positively affecting every region and every resident. Whether moving over a hundred million tons of cargo annually or millions of cruise passengers, Florida’s seaports generate and support a vast array of commerce. These seaports are the gateway for shipment of goods into and out of Florida and link our state to vital international markets. Our seaports have a \$117.6 billion economic impact on the state and account for more than 900,000 direct and indirect jobs. |
| Port Manatee | |
| Port of Palm Beach | The bi-partisan efforts of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee over the past several years have had a significant impact on seaports in Florida, as well as the entire nation. Starting with WRRDA 2014, the Committee made significant reforms to a stagnant and difficult navigational harbor construction and maintenance process. Florida was finally able to enter into a partnership with federal agencies to move forward on projects at all of our major seaport harbors. |
| Port of Panama City | |
| Port of Pensacola | Florida is the only state with navigational harbors bordering two major shipping lanes – the Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean. The Committee’s efforts have enabled Florida to deepen the harbors at Canaveral, Jacksonville, Miami, and Tampa. In addition, the Harbor Maintenance Funds directed by the Committee continue to allow for navigational maintenance at all of Florida’s seaports and our inland navigational rivers throughout Florida. These reform efforts have also allowed the Army Corps to repair navigational and water issues at Milepoint in Jacksonville, and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan that includes vital water projects around Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades. |
| Port of Port St. Joe | |
| Port St. Pete | But, as you all know, the work is not done. The navigational deepening project at Port Everglades in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida has experienced well over 20 years of reviews and discussions. That port is a vital fuel and cargo seaport for Florida’s growing population, and issues must be resolved to allow that project to move forward. PortMiami will need |
| Port Tampa Bay | |

additional navigational deepening to allow for additional larger cargo vessels to safely transit and offload at the port. And, even absent navigational hazards caused by hurricanes, Florida has ongoing maintenance and operations needs at all of our harbors. We also continue to work with Congress and the Administration to ensure that adequate funds are provided to congressionally approved projects. We fully support the efforts of this Committee to ensure that the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund is used for its intended purpose -- maintaining the country's commercial harbors.

Finally, we would like to offer our assistance and services to the Committee to hold on-site hearings at any of our seaports on the Gulf or Atlantic. We can provide the Committee and staff with port and navigational tours of Army Corps operations at our seaports, as well as committee hearing space for any necessary discussions with port administration, federal agency, and private sector maritime businesses.

Again, we applaud the bi-partisan efforts the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has undertaken on WRDA legislation. We are committed to providing any assistance the Committee might need on future legislative efforts.

Thank you for all of your efforts on behalf of this nation's seaports.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Doug Wheeler', written in a cursive style.

Doug Wheeler
President & CEO
Florida Ports Council