



July 28, 2021

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

RE: Support for North Carolina State Ports Authority's New North Gate Project at the Port of Wilmington under the United States Department of Transportation's FY2021 Port Infrastructure Development Grant program.

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

This letter is to express the NC Rural Center's support for the North Carolina State Ports Authority's (NC Ports) application for the United States' Department of Transportation's FY2021 Port Infrastructure Development grant program to fund a new north gate at the Port of Wilmington.

The Port of Wilmington is an important gateway to the global marketplace and rural industries like lumber and food/agricultural exports rely on our state's Port for global trade. Projects to improve the port facilities at the Port of Wilmington will increase the capacity of the port terminal and improve the ability of the Port of Wilmington to reach new markets.

As an economic development partner with the North Carolina Ports, I support the improvements to the intermodal and container facility; they will provide the needed infrastructure to support this critical shipping gateway and increase global trade opportunities for our rural communities and industries. The importance of these improvements cannot be overstated; seventeen of the twenty-five most economically distressed counties in North Carolina are either close to or adjacent to corridors that connect to the Port of Wilmington. This project will strengthen the rural export-oriented manufacturing and agriculture competitive advantage.

As an economic development partner with NC Ports, we support this new venture as it will increase capacity through this growing hub and make significant contributions to the region. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick N. Woodie". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Patrick Woodie, President

The NC Rural Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Our Tax ID is 56-1552375. Please consult with your tax professional for specific instructions.

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