



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

J. ERIC BOYETTE
SECRETARY

March 8, 2023

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

SUBJECT: Support for North Carolina State Ports Authority's North Gate Relocation and Access Optimization project at the Port of Wilmington under the United States Department of Transportation's FY2023 Port Infrastructure Development Grant program.

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the North Carolina Department of Transportation, I am writing to express our support for the North Carolina State Ports Authority's (NC Ports) application for the United States Department of Transportation's FY2023 Port Infrastructure Development grant program to fund the North Gate Relocation and Access Optimization project at the Port of Wilmington.

NC Ports owns and operates an ocean port terminal in Wilmington, North Carolina in New Hanover County and the operation of such a terminal is a tremendous catalyst for economic growth and development throughout North Carolina and the region. They have contributed more than \$16.2 billion in annual economic contribution to the state's economy constituted by goods moving through the port facilities and supported 88,200 full-time jobs at North Carolina businesses.

The North Gate Relocation and Access Optimization project will construct a new private access road and North Gate vehicle entrance to the Port of Wilmington that resolves truck congestion on neighborhood surface streets and eliminates truck delays and congestion at an existing railroad grade crossing. Currently, vehicles entering the Port of Wilmington's North Gate must cross a highway-rail grade crossing situated at the port's main railroad switching yard. Train operations and switching movements in the railroad yard can block the roadway leading from the North Gate to port facilities for nearly two hours daily. When trains occupy the crossing, inbound trucks quickly back up along the neighborhood street leading to the North Gate, delaying the delivery of goods to the port, and creating traffic obstructions, roadway congestion, noise, and pollution that negatively impacts local residents.

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The ability for the port to increase capacity through this growing economic hub has many benefits. Overall, this investment will reduce traffic congestion and improve safety, efficiency, system performance, and infrastructure, as well as deliver environmental benefits to the community. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Eric Boyette", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

J. Eric Boyette
Secretary of Transportation
North Carolina Department of Transportation