



October 23, 2014

Ms. Erin Owen  
Water Quality Certification and Wetlands Section  
SCDHEC – Bureau of Water  
2600 Bull Street  
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Ms. Owen:

This letter serves as an endorsement from the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce to SC DHEC to approve the proposed 52-foot harbor deepening project.

This project is absolutely essential to South Carolina's economic future. Deepening South Carolina's harbor to 52 feet is a game changer for jobs and economic growth for generations to come. This support resulted in concrete action when the General Assembly, in a bipartisan vote, set aside the state's share of the estimated funds needed for the project—the only state to do so. This action demonstrates that our state, long known for its robust political climate, has come together in a unique and tangible way to support harbor deepening.

I have confidence in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environment Impact Statement, which finds the project can be accomplished in an environmentally-responsible manner.

Simply put, this project must go forward for the economic well-being of our state for generations to come. Our port system is tied to one of every 11 jobs statewide. It is the key reason for our tremendous economic growth since recruiting BMW in the early 1990s. Failure to deepen the harbor to accommodate post-Panamax vessels around the clock would impact our collective statewide efforts to create more jobs and improve the quality of life for our citizens.

USACE and SC Department of Health and Environmental Control have the support of South Carolina to approve this project. I respectfully request that you do so.

Sincerely,

Blakely Williams  
President & CEO