



Ron Burrows - Commissioner Rogers County District 3

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am pleased to strongly support the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application to the U.S. Maritime Administration for the FY 2024 Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) to help fund the MKARNS Barge Safety & Efficiency Improvement Project. This project will improve operational efficiencies, support a more resilient navigable waterway, alleviate congestion, and maintain fluidity at Oklahoma's waterway ports on the inland waterway system which is essential to our nation's continued economic recovery.

A component of the larger, critically important waterway project is located within Rogers County at the Tulsa Port of Catoosa. The Tulsa Port of Catoosa is a multi-modal shipping complex with over 2,500 acres of industrial park space, hosting 70 companies and supporting almost 3,000 livable-wage jobs. This Port accounts for \$300 million in economic activity each year across a variety of sectors including agricultural commodities, building materials, and petroleum products. The Ports' mooring infrastructure within its slack-water harbor are rendered functionally obsolete and need to be replaced. While the expiration of the existing mooring structures intended useful life was already on the horizon, their condition was significantly worsened by extreme flooding in 2019, which damaged infrastructure in many places along the Oklahoma portion of the MKARNS, including at the Port of Muskogee. This project would improve the resiliency of the port and the navigation system, and increase adaptability to unexpected events, such as supply chain disruptions.

I am encouraged that ODOT has been working alongside Tulsa Ports and Port Muskogee to build a coalition of support for this project, as it will not be possible to complete this project without federal assistance.

The development and resiliency of Oklahoma's marine infrastructure is one of the top priorities of the Rogers County Board of County Commissioners and I appreciate your strong consideration of this application. Please feel free to contact me as you consider this important project.

Sincerely,

Ron Burrows,
Commissioner Rogers County