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May 3, 2024

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the Port of Osceola Harbor Expansion project for Fiscal Year 2025. The entity to receive funding for this project is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The funding will be used to complete a 3,000-foot expansion of the inland waterway harbor at Osceola.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because of the Port's tremendous untapped capacity that could expand regional economic growth and support increased cargo movement on the Mississippi River, particularly agriculture products and steel. Osceola harbor is currently 6,500 feet long. According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Memphis District, the original plans for the harbor offered two options: 6,500 feet or 9,500 feet. The shorter length was ultimately chosen due to cost constraints. While this length has been adequate for some years, is no longer sufficient to accommodate the increased traffic and the higher tonnage that are now commonplace on river barges.

Osceola Harbor is a vital hub for the local economy, and in recent years, there has been a significant increase in barge traffic, primarily due to the burgeoning steel industry in the region. This growth, while beneficial for the local economy, has put a strain on the current harbor infrastructure. As such, this project would allow the USACE to expand the harbor by the additional 3,000 feet that was originally contemplated. The explosive growth of the Osceola area, and that of greater Mississippi County, Arkansas, has led to major back-ups at the port as barge traffic is overwhelming the harbor. With additional industrial operations set to open at the harbor, the need for a longer harbor is critical.

This project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by the USACE Continuing Authorities Program.

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric A. Crawford". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Eric A. "Rick" Crawford
Member of Congress