

STATE CAPITOL
201 W. CAPITOL AVENUE, ROOM 216
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI 65101



(573) 751-3222
WWW.GOVERNOR.MO.GOV

Michael L. Parson

GOVERNOR
STATE OF MISSOURI

October 2, 2019

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Mr. James:

As a governor representing a state economically reliant upon our nation's inland waterway system, I write to encourage your support in helping secure and direct federal funding that would provide significant benefit to Missouri and other states connected to the Mississippi River and tributaries.

The Mississippi River Ship Channel extends for 256 river miles starting in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and ending in the Gulf of Mexico. It accommodates more freight tonnage than any other port complex in the United States. The Mississippi River and Tributaries project has an estimated \$735.7 billion annual economic impact and is responsible for approximately 2.4 million jobs. Missouri and other states that export products such as soybean and corn rely upon this link to access the international marketplace.

Many industries and regions across the country are promoting the deepening of this portion of the river to 50 feet, from 45 feet. For large ocean-going vessels, every additional foot of water depth enables the vessel to accommodate \$1 million in additional cargo. The Director of Civil Works for the Army Corps of Engineers has issued a report that describes deepening the lower Mississippi River as "economically justified and environmentally sustainable." The report highlights the benefit/cost ratio of the project as 7.2 to 1. Furthermore, the Soy Transportation Coalition calculates that completion of this project would result in \$35 million in additional annual revenue for Missouri soybean farmers and \$461 million across the U.S. The farmer leaders of the United Soybean Board recently invested \$2 million to help underwrite the cost of the deepening, and the State of Louisiana has also committed to providing non-federal funding to activate the project. Securing and directing federal funding is the last step to make this project a reality.

Infrastructure investment allows us to provide significant value for industries that rely on international markets. It is our hope the United States will continue to demonstrate our ability to outcompete the rest of the world. To do so, we must strategically invest in our infrastructure. Deepening the Mississippi River Ship Channel will be one such investment that will propel our country into the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael L. Parson".

Michael L. Parson
Governor

c: White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs