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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1806

November 2, 2017

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write to request funding for Louisiana Highway 1 (LA 1) through the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program's rural set aside. The Greater Lafourche Port Commission submitted an application for the Golden Meadow to Leeville phase of this important project. To date, $390,000,000 has already been invested in the LA 1 upgrade project. This includes $176,000,000 derived from toll revenues.

LA 1 is one of the most important energy corridors in the nation. Studies by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and others confirm the national importance of the project. The Gulf of Mexico produces nearly 40 percent of domestic crude and 35 percent of domestic natural gas. More than 80 percent of Gulf oil comes from deepwater and 50 percent of all Gulf natural gas comes from deepwater. Port Fourchon currently services more than 90 percent of Gulf of Mexico deepwater production and supplies the US with 18 percent of domestic volume.

Traffic counts at Port Fourchon indicate that 1,200 large trucks ship product daily in an out of Port Fourchon on LA 1. This traffic volume is staggering in its own rite, but particularly meaningful when considering the very important role of this port and this highway to the US energy economy.

The road is increasingly inundated as a result of high tides, sea rise, high winds, subsidence and tropical storm events. This Golden Meadow to Leeville component is the last segment needed to connect Fourchon to areas within the hurricane protection system in Golden Meadow via an elevated roadway. Ensuring access to the port will directly support President Trump's larger plan for energy dominance.

Congress recognized the important role highway infrastructure plays in our national energy security when we created the INFRA/Nationally Significant Frieght and Highway Projects program in the FAST Act. Specifically, my amendment to the Act modified 23 U.S.C. 117 in subsection (a)(2)(F) to clearly establish that a goal of the INFRA program is to "*improve roadways vital to national energy security*". During discussion of the amendment, I specifically cited LA 1 as the reason for the provision. Further, Congress designated LA 1 as a "High Priority Corridor" in amendments to the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (Corridor 44).

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As you review the many applicants for the rural set aside of the INFRA program, I strongly urge you to consider the outstanding qualifications of the Greater Lafourche Port Commission's submission and the explicit FAST Act objectives this important project achieves.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Garret Graves
Member of Congress