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**Congress of the United States
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 Washington, DC 20515**

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January 20, 2011

The Honorable Ray LaHood
 Secretary
 U.S. Department of Transportation
 1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
 Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing to seek your assistance in including a nominal amount of construction funds in the Army Corps 2012 budget for the Port of Miami's deep dredge project. The Port of Miami is committed to providing the entire \$75 million Federal share of the project. However, some measure of federal funds is required in order for the Corps to be able to use the non federal funds.

The Port of Miami is the only port south of Norfolk, VA with an authorized 50 foot depth which is "ready to go" and can be completed by 2014, which will be the opening of the expanded Panama Canal. The deep dredge is authorized, preconstruction work is ongoing and a construction contract can be advertised by late 2011.

The Port of Miami is important to the State of Florida and to the nation's economy. It accounts for 176,000 high paying jobs and an annual \$18 billion economic impact. Completion of the deep dredge will create an additional 33,000 jobs for South Florida and assure that those jobs are not lost to foreign transshipment hubs (in Nassau and Jamaica), which already have 50 foot plus drafts.

The Miami deep dredge project is considered a New Start. However, it is not a conventional new start, and as the project sponsor, the Port of Miami is committed to pay for the entire federal share. This project also goes hand in hand with the rail expansion funding provided in the TIGER II grant program.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I would greatly appreciate your consideration of the merits of this important economic development project for Florida.

Sincerely,

Corrine Brown
 Member of Congress