

January 14, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama

The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500



Dear Mr. President,


As the Presidents of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) Locals 1416 and 1922, we urge you, on behalf of our members, to put nominal construction funding in your FY2012 Budget for the Port of Miami -50ft Deep Dredge. If the Deep Dredge is not finished by 2014, the ships will literally pass by Florida ports and offload at nearby foreign ports, such as Freeport in the Bahamas. Florida faces a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform its economy by becoming a global hub for trade, logistics, and export oriented manufacturing activities, and if we don't act now, the jobs will go offshore. Completion of the Port of Miami Deep Dredge Project will ensure the doubling of existing cargo business over the next ten years and the creation of more than 33,000 permanent, well-paying jobs.

We are seeking your support of this initiative, by including a nominal amount of \$100,000 in construction funds in the FY 2012 budget. Indicative of the project's national significance, the Port of Miami is committed to work with its state and local partners to front the federal share of the total project cost. The Port of Miami is the largest container port in Florida and the 11<sup>th</sup> largest in the nation. The port accounts for \$18 billion in economic impact annually and 176,000 high-paying jobs. As the closest major U.S. port to the Panama Canal, the Port of Miami is positioned as the first port of call for the next generation of fully-laden post-Panamax vessels that will transit the expanded Panama Canal beginning in 2014. It is also the only port south of Norfolk, VA with an authorized -50 foot depth which is "ready-to-go" and can be completed by 2014. Having received congressional authorization and with the preconstruction work on schedule for completion by this fall, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers could be ready to advertise by the end of the year. However, we need some amount of funding in the FY2012 budget.

We respectfully request, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, that you consider the immediate and long term economic and employment benefits to Florida and the nation provided by the Miami deep dredge project. Thank you for your consideration of an FY 2012 budget allocation in order to assure timely completion of this important national project.

Sincerely,

  
Gerardo Becerra  
President, ILA Local 1922

  
Clarence Pittman  
President, ILA Local 1416