



**Wisconsin Department of Transportation**  
Office of the Secretary  
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**Governor Tony Evers**  
**Secretary Craig Thompson**  
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September 20, 2019

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

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing to express my strong support for Port Milwaukee's grant application to establish a first-of-its-kind trade lane for the worldwide export of Dry Distillers Grain with Solubles (DDGs) via deep-draft shipping on the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway (GLSLS) system. Port Milwaukee's *Agricultural Maritime Export Facility* project directly fulfills all qualifications for the U.S. Maritime Administration's Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP), including:

- Implementing a broad range of improvements at one of Wisconsin's most commercially productive seaports;
- Modernizing the safety of Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure;
- Enhancing multimodal efficiency in southeastern Wisconsin;
- Improving the reliability of the movement of goods; and
- Promoting the unloading and loading of cargoes and freight at the Port.

As currently envisioned, Port Milwaukee's project seeks to:

- Export at least \$40 million of DDGs through the Port annually;
- Establish the newest transload facility on the Great Lakes for loading of Seawaymax vessels;
- Expand Wisconsin's agribusiness access to international markets;
- Improve market access for ethanol by-products produced in Wisconsin and throughout the Upper Midwest;
- Provide for an estimated 50,000 work hours supporting construction of the new Port facilities;
- Create at least 8 full-time jobs in Wisconsin; and
- Enhance revenue-generating potential for corn and soybean producers in Wisconsin and other farmers throughout the Upper Midwest.

This development, which supports the goals of Wisconsin's State Freight Plan, will greatly enhance and improve the multimodal transportation system in Wisconsin and enable regional economic growth. It will undoubtedly increase export traffic via the GLSLS, including the USDOT-operated Seaway locks in Massena, New York.

In summary, I strongly support Port Milwaukee's PIDP grant application for the proposed *Agricultural Maritime Export Facility* project. Thank you for considering this project and the benefits it will bring to Wisconsin's transportation system, as well as to the farmers, workers, and broader business community throughout the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Thompson", written over a white background.

Craig Thompson  
Secretary

cc: Mark H. Buzby; Administrator, Maritime Administration  
Craig H. Middlebrook; Deputy Administrator, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation