

August 30, 2016

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
H-232 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
S-230 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Shuster  
Chairman  
House Transportation Committee  
2251 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James Inhofe  
Chairman  
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader McConnell, Chairmen Shuster and Inhofe:

I write today to urge September action on the 2016 Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) pending in both the House and Senate.

Both versions of the bill include a critical construction authorization for dredging the Port of Charleston. The 52-foot depth is needed now to accommodate larger, neo-Panamax container ships 24-hours up and down the East coast. Without the authorization, this project – currently under budget and ahead of schedule – could quickly fall behind schedule, placing a huge burden on regional, national and even global commerce. As a customer of the Port of Charleston, Mercedes-Benz Vans fully supports deepening the Charleston Harbor.

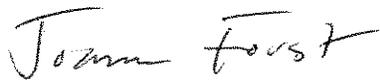
The Port of Charleston is the economic development engine for South Carolina and the entire region. According to South Carolina Ports Authority, in South Carolina alone, it facilitates nearly 200,000 jobs and generates about \$53 billion in economic activity annually.

For over a decade Mercedes-Benz Vans has manufactured Sprinter vehicles in South Carolina. Mercedes-Benz Vans is located in Ladson, South Carolina. The U.S. is now the Sprinter's second-largest sales market after Germany. In 2015, Mercedes-Benz Vans delivered about 28,600 units to customers in the United States - 11 percent more than in the previous year. Given the growth of Sprinter sales, Mercedes-Benz Vans has announced additional investment and jobs at the Ladson facility. The success of Sprinter has also brought new investment to the North Charleston area from businesses that upfit vans into customized commercial vehicles. Mercedes-Benz Vans uses the Port of Charleston for delivery of Sprinter parts for re-assembly as well as Sprinter vans exported from Germany.

Deepening the Charleston harbor will provide new, better transportation logistics options to East Coast-based companies, particularly those based in South Carolina like Mercedes-Benz Vans. A deeper harbor means global companies will look to the Port of Charleston to lower their logistics costs and move goods more efficiently. Bigger ships means more containers per vessel and more competition—key drivers for stable, lower container rates. A deeper harbor will ensure the Port of Charleston's long-term viability as a prime destination for all vessel-lines. There can be little doubt this project will make South Carolina a more attractive place to invest for companies, from large multinational corporations to small, local retail businesses.

Given the importance of the Port of Charleston to Mercedes-Benz Vans, please make WRDA a priority agenda item for September.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joanna Foust".

JOANNA FOUST  
General Manager, Federal Affairs  
External Affairs-Americas  
Daimler North America Corp.