

January 29, 2020

Colonel Steve M. Sattinger
Commander U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Clock Tower Building
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004

Dear Colonel Steven M. Sattinger:

The Iowa Economic Development Authority enthusiastically supports the creation of the Mississippi River Ports of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois (MRPEIWI) Port Statistical Area (PSA), and we encourage expedited approval.


As you may already know well, Iowa's diverse economy, particularly the state's success in the advanced manufacturing sector, stands out as reason why Iowa's economy is stable and vibrant. Despite Iowa's leadership role in feeding the world, it is advanced manufacturing that makes up the state's largest single business sector, contributing \$30 billion annually to our economy, placing Iowa seventh in the nation for manufacturing GDP.

Iowa's economy, particularly our manufacturing industry, relies on the benefits derived from exporting to destinations worldwide. Waterborne commerce plays an integral part in our international trade activities and has enabled Iowa to be more nationally and globally competitive. In fact, the Maritime Highway on our eastern coast gives us an economic edge that many states do not have.

Iowa will benefit from this federal recognition as a multi-modal port region. Not only will the MRPEIWI PSA support regional marketing and economic development efforts, but it will also help raise the region's profile to improve regional, national and global visibility and competitiveness. Additionally, it will give our state a competitive edge in attracting a wide range of public and private investment and create an important regional multi-modal transportation infrastructure identity.

Waterways have been an important part of our economic history and will continue to be an important part of our future as well. Please feel free to contact me or my staff if we can be of any assistance in obtaining this federal designation.

Sincerely,



Debi V. Durham
Director