



April 15, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing to express support for the Portland Harbor Dredge and CAD Cell Project.

Portland is Maine's largest and busiest deep water shipping port. Crucial supply chain goods are shipped in and out of Portland constantly. They include, but are not limited to food, medical supplies, farming equipment, machinery, road salt, gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel, asphalt, kerosene, heating oil, and as of the past year, military equipment to support the war in Ukraine. Portland Pilots operates two Pilot vessels, which carry us to and from the ships entering the port, to ensure safe and efficient flow of cargo through the port.

The pilot vessels require deep, sheltered wharfage, which, due to the lack of dredging, has become scarce. In addition to the shipping industry that supports the port, commercial fishing is also a major contributing industry in Casco Bay. Hundreds of fishing boats harbor in Portland and South Portland, ranging from small lobster boats to large offshore draggers. Over the years, it has become far more prevalent to see many of these boats grounded out at low water, unable to depart until the tide increases. Dredging must be completed in order to maintain these necessary industries. This project has obtained approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, all but this last tranche of funding has been allocated, and only needs the federal match for this essential project to take place.

Finally, dredging will not only eliminate a lack of available deep water berthing space, but it will remove harmful contaminants embedded in the mud. I cannot stress the importance of this project to the port of Portland, and the entire State of Maine. Portland Harbor is a critical economic hub for the State of Maine and greater New England. However, it is impossible to provide pilot services to arriving vessels without the harbor being brought into a state of good repair. Portland Pilots respectfully request that you favorably consider and approve this project that is critical to port operations, and the men, women, and families of Maine who rely on critical supplies that arrive by sea.

Sincerely,


Captain Calvin Klopp, President