
From: South Carolina Ports Authority <scspainfo@scspa.com>
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Subject: U.S. Senate WRDA Passage Moves Charleston Harbor Deepening Project Closer to Construction

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**U.S. Senate WRDA Passage Moves Charleston Harbor
Deepening Project Closer to Construction**

Project awaits final authorization by U.S. House of Representatives

CHARLESTON, SC - September 14, 2016 - Today the U.S. Senate passed the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2016, a significant milestone that moves the 52-foot Charleston Harbor Deepening Project to the U.S. House of Representatives for final authorization to begin construction.

"WRDA is critical legislation for port and port-related infrastructure modernization projects across the country, and we are grateful to Senators Graham and Scott for their unwavering support of its passage," said Jim Newsome, SCPA president and CEO. "We are extremely pleased that the Charleston Harbor Deepening Project will now move forward to the House for final authorization. Congressional approval will allow project construction to begin, ensuring the Port remains on track to deliver all of the capabilities needed of a modern harbor by the end of the decade."

The Senate passed the bill 95-3 with nearly unanimous bipartisan support. From a national perspective, the legislation includes critical authorizations necessary for the U.S. to compete in the global marketplace as well as strengthens floodwater protections of coastal and inland communities.

"Our entire delegation recognizes the importance of this bill as the final hurdle for Charleston Harbor Deepening," said SCPA Board Chairman Pat McKinney. "We applaud their continued dedication and focus on economic growth in South Carolina by helping our port system remain competitive."

The House bill is expected to receive strong support from a South Carolina delegation united in their support of the project.

"We are encouraged by the Senate's passage of the Water Resources Development Act of 2016, which includes authorization of the Charleston Harbor Deepening Project to 52 feet. The South Carolina Ports Authority's ability to handle New Panamax vessels is critical to businesses large and small across our state and region and vital to the nation's economy. We look forward to working with House Leadership, Chairman Shuster, and Ranking Member DeFazio in order to optimize debate time on the floor and look forward to the passage of a WRDA bill this Congress," said South Carolina Congressmen Mark Sanford (SC - 1), Joe Wilson (SC - 2), Jeff Duncan (SC - 3), Trey Gowdy (SC - 4), Mick Mulvaney (SC - 5), Jim Clyburn (SC - 6) and Tom Rice (SC - 7) in a joint statement.

Efforts to deepen the Charleston Harbor began in 2012, and the project progressed quickly as the first feasibility study completed entirely through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers SMART Planning process. The USACE's original estimate of seven years and \$20 million dollars for the study and associated environmental reviews and permits was nearly cut in half to four years and \$11 million as a result of the new program, as well as collaboration with state and federal partner agencies. It received its Chief's Report in just four years. Most recently, the project received its Record of Decision by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) in January and has since awaited authorization through WRDA.

"This is good news for our state and another step towards final authorization of the Charleston Harbor Deepening Project," said Gov. Nikki Haley. "We will continue working with our federal delegation, state leaders and members of the General Assembly to deepen Charleston's port, as the success of this project is vital to South Carolina building on the record-breaking economic development momentum we've seen over the last five years."

"The Senate's action today is incredibly positive news for the Port and the entire state," said Senator Larry Grooms, SC Review and Oversight Commission on the SCPA Chairman. "This world-class deepening project will ensure our Port remains well-positioned for future growth. I congratulate Senators Graham and Scott for their efforts, and encourage the U.S. House to bring this critical infrastructure bill across the finish line."

About South Carolina Ports Authority

South Carolina Ports Authority (SCPA), established by the state's General Assembly in 1942, owns and operates public seaport facilities in Charleston, Georgetown and Greer. In 2015 SCPA handled international commerce valued at more than \$74 billion while receiving no direct taxpayer subsidy. An economic development engine for the state, Port operations facilitate 187,200 statewide

jobs and generate nearly \$53 billion annual economic activity. Home to the Southeast's deepest port, SCPA is the industry leader in delivering speed-to-market, seamless processes and flexibility to ensure reliable operations, big ship handling, efficient market reach and environmental responsibility. For more information on SCPA, please visit www.scspa.com.

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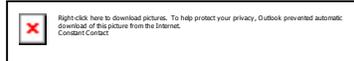


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