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March 26, 2025

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

Dear Secretary Duffy:

Congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of Transportation! I look forward to working with you to strengthen our transportation network and keep our travelers safe.

I am writing today to express my strong support for designating the Ouachita River as Marine Highway M-165. This designation represents a critical step in bolstering economic growth and infrastructure development in north Louisiana and the greater Ouachita River Basin.

The Ouachita River is an essential transportation corridor that has long provided a reliable and efficient means of moving goods and commodities through the region. Designating it as a marine highway will further enhance its capacity to facilitate commerce, reduce highway congestion, and provide an additional viable option for freight movement through waterborne transportation. Additionally, this designation will unlock new opportunities for economic development in the region, particularly through the expansion of agricultural exports like rice, soybeans, cotton, and timber—key pillars of Louisiana's economy

Waterborne transportation is a safe, fuel-efficient, and cost-effective way to move freight. Expanding the use of the Ouachita River will improve supply chain reliability, lower transportation costs, and support economic stability for businesses and communities across Louisiana and the greater Ouachita River Basin. Additionally, this designation aligns with federal, state, and local efforts to maintain and enhance critical infrastructure for long-term economic growth.

I urge the Department of Transportation to consider this designation and recognize the immense potential of the Ouachita River in advancing regional and national economic interests. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to working together to continue moving Louisiana forward.

If I can answer any questions regarding this topic, or otherwise be of help, please contact Kade Smith in my office at Kade.Smith@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julia Letlow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Julia" and last name "Letlow" clearly distinguishable.

Julia Letlow, Ph.D.

MEMBER OF CONGRESS
