Natchez Inc.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
for Natchez & Adams County

March 24, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington, DC 20250

Subject: Strong Support for the Biofuel Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone Initiative

Dear Secretary Rollins,

I am writing on behalf of Natchez, Inc. to express our support for the Biofuel Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone Initiative – a visionary program that is redefining the economic potential of rural communities across the United States.

Our journey with the BDO Zone designation began in May of 2023 and the results have been nothing short of extraordinary. Since achieving our rating, we have witnessed a profound shift in our community's economic trajectory. Preliminary assessments indicate:

- Five (5) potential project developers expressing serious interest
- Projected investments totaling approximately $300 Million in biofuel and agricultural technologies
- Anticipated creation of 250 jobs across multiple sectors

The BDO Zone criteria has proven to be an invaluable screening mechanism for developers. By providing a clear, measurable framework for community readiness, this initiative does what traditional economic development approaches have struggled to achieve: it creates a direct pathway for transformative investment.

We implore the USDA to continue expanding and supporting this groundbreaking initiative. The BDO Zone program represents a model of innovative, strategic economic development that can be replicated across rural America.

Sincerely,

Chandler Russ
Executive Director

P.O. Box 700 • Natchez, MS 39121 • info@natchezinc.com