



MARITIME EXCHANGE

for the Delaware River and Bay

Leading the Way to Port Progress

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A. Robert Degen, Esq., Secretary/Solicitor

December 8, 2017

To: Tristate Congressional Memers

Re: Port Security Grant Program Funding of \$100 Million is Critical

Dear :

This letter is to request your support for Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) funding of \$100 million for FY18. This figure is consistent with appropriations of the past several years and reflects the amount needed for port operators and local agencies to continue to combat threats against maritime infrastructure.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the House Homeland Security Appropriations Bill included \$100 million in PSGP funding. However, the Administration's budget requests only \$48 million for the program, and the Senate's current proposed level is an equally dismal \$50 million.

The PSGP ranks among the most important federal programs for the maritime industry. It helps ports, local law enforcement, and other stakeholders mitigate maritime security threats and vulnerabilities, which are ever changing and ever increasing. As we all know, eliminating risk entirely is simply impossible, yet it is crucial that ports replace equipment over time, update deteriorating assets that wear quickly in the harsh marine environment, and add new protections to prevent cyber intrusions by the growing numbers of malicious actors.

At a time when international terrorism continues to be a great threat and cyber breaches are on the rise, decreasing our maritime defenses is not only risky but foolhardy. Security failures at port facilities can lead to devastating economic and environmental damage, not to mention the potential for loss of life.

At the lower security grant funding level, Delaware River port stakeholders will not receive any security grant funding. With \$50 million or less available, almost certainly only the top two or three ports would receive funding. Keeping in mind that the PSGP was originally funded at \$400 million annually, it is evident the \$100 million figure balances the national need with the realities of an extremely difficult budget climate.

The Maritime Exchange strongly recommends that the FY18 Homeland Security Appropriations includes \$100 million for the Port Security Grant Program, and that this amount be also included in the pending Omnibus bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact me at 215-925-2615 or dennis.rochford@maritimedelriv.com or if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Dennis Rochford
President

cc: Lisa Hember, Vice President