



MARITIME EXCHANGE

for the Delaware River and Bay

Leading the Way to Port Progress

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October 18, 2019

To: Tristate Senate Delegation

RE: FY20 National Oceanic Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) PORTS® Program funding

At Delaware River ports, safety is always the primary consideration. Among the most powerful tools available in this regard is NOAA's Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System, or PORTS.

The Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay supports the Senate's \$7.5 million funding of this system, a \$2.5 million increase over the \$5 million provided each year over the last decade. Further, the Exchange endorses the attached letter from the American Association of Port Authorities to appropriations leadership requesting consideration of this matter.

This additional funding will enable NOAA to expand the system beyond its current 33 locations.

PORTS is vital a source of real-time information at Delaware River ports and throughout the nation. Its value as a decision-support aid that improves safety, efficiency, and coastal resource management is unparalleled. Mariners rely on PORTS to plan for and during transits, which informs actions based on actual vs. predicted tide and weather conditions. This is particularly critical on the Delaware, a tidal river.

Of particular note is that PORTS helps protect five regional bridges, the Cape May Lewes Ferry, and other critical infrastructure against spills, collisions, and allisions. Clearly, PORTS is key to the Delaware River's competitive standing, good-paying jobs, substantial revenues, and the regional maritime industry's ability to attract and retain customers, all of which depend heavily on an exemplary safety record.

The Exchange appreciates the Senate's recognition of the critical importance of our nation's ports and their crucial role in the U.S. transportation system and economy.

Thank you in advance for your support of this needed funding. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have at dennis.rochford@maritimedelriv.com or at 215-925-2615.

Sincerely,

Dennis Rochford
President

/Att.

cc: Lisa Humber

October 9, 2019

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce, Science,
and Related Agencies
SD-521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
c/o Lauren Orndorff

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce, Science,
and Related Agencies
SH-506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
c/o Ariel Marshall

The Honorable José Enrique Serrano
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce, Science,
and Related Agencies
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
c/o Marcus Garza

The Honorable Robert B. Aderholt
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce, Science,
and Related Agencies
H-310 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
c/o Robert Bonner

Dear Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Shaheen, Chairman Serrano, and Ranking Member Aderholt:

RE: FY 2020 National Oceanic Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) PORTS Program funding

Ensuring our nation's seaports safely and efficiently move freight is a critical priority for the economic health of this nation. A well-maintained port system is responsible for over a quarter of the United States GDP and nearly 31 million American jobs. The efficiency of the seaport systems is critical to manufacturers, exporters, and farmers who count on U.S. ports to move their products to market and provide essential goods for their supply chain.

I write today in support of the Senate's \$7.5 million funding for NOAA's Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS). This amount is a \$2.5 million increase over \$5 million provided over the last decade. This funding increase will enable NOAA to make significant progress to reduce the maintenance backlog on existing equipment, modernize equipment to a consistent current platform across the nation, and transition new services from development to full implementation. AAPA appreciates the Senate's request for NOAA to review and report on the program's total costs to inform future appropriations decisions.

This program is a vital source of trusted real-time information available to mariners and pilots on specific channel conditions enabling safe and efficient decisions to be made with confidence and keep our seaports moving. The program has expanded over the past decade to 33 locations serving over 75 of the Nation's largest and most active ports. The expansion and additional services were accomplished while receiving flat funding of \$5 million over the past decade.

We appreciate your recognition of the critical importance of ports and their crucial role in the U.S. transportation system and economy. Please let us know whenever AAPA and our member ports may be of any assistance.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,



Kurt Nagle