



Alliance of the Ports of Canada, the Caribbean, Latin America and the United States

1010 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3589
Phone: (703) 684-5700
Fax: (703) 684-6321
www.aapa-ports.org

Contact:

Aaron Ellis - 703-684-5700
aellis@aapa-ports.org

NEWS RELEASE

AAPA 'Fly-In' Meetings Address U.S. Port Priorities

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (October 2, 2019) – Port executives from throughout the U.S. converged on Washington, D.C. and Capitol Hill last week as part of the bi-annual “fly-in,” conducted by the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) ... the unified and recognized voice of America’s seaports ... to discuss legislative and funding priorities important to the nation’s ports.

“Ports are a crucial part of America’s infrastructure, serving as transportation hubs to world markets,” said [Susan Monteverde](#), AAPA’s vice president of government relations. “The federal government is a vital partner in ensuring port infrastructure is world-class and well maintained.”

AAPA President and CEO [Kurt Nagle](#) noted that he was “particularly pleased” with the reception policymakers and their staffs gave the AAPA delegation, saying, “AAPA has worked hard to advance the interests of its member ports on Capitol Hill, and delegations like this help amplify AAPA’s messages about what federal officials can do to ensure our nation’s ports are successful.”

In a [Martin Associates report](#) earlier this year, U.S. port activities are cited with supporting nearly 31 million American jobs, contributing \$5.4 trillion to the domestic economy (representing more than one-quarter of U.S. GDP), and generating \$378 billion in federal, state and local taxes.

Among the priorities AAPA “fly-in” participants brought up with policymakers and their staffs was implementing [AAPA’s proposed solution](#) for Harbor Maintenance Tax spending reform as part of the next Water Resources Development Act, and fiscal 2020 funding levels for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Ports also voiced concern over recent requests from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) for ports to foot the bill for expensive and extensive CBP facilities and facility upgrades. AAPA was pleased to learn last week that the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Homeland Security’s report directed CBP to work with industry on this issue.

During the fly-in, AAPA members expressed deep concern over the low funding level for the U.S. Maritime Administration’s new Port Infrastructure Development grants program. The Senate last week voted to decrease funding for these grants from the current \$287 million level to \$91.6 million in fiscal 2020. AAPA learned late last week that, in the first round of grant applications,

that U.S. coastal ports had requested approximately \$1 billion in funds, showcasing the overwhelming need by ports for these grants.

“The Port Infrastructure Development grants are the first program aimed solely at port infrastructure needs” said Ms. Monteverde. “We urge Congress to grow the program, not cut it.”

AAPA’s fiscal 2020 recommendation is to fund the Port Infrastructure Development grants program at \$300 million.

AAPA members also voiced strong support for waiving the cap on multimodal funding in U.S. Department of Transportation’s FAST Act reauthorization legislation, including funding for INFRA (Infrastructure For Rebuilding America) grants and state freight funds. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee recently approved its proposal to reauthorize the FAST Act and expanded multimodal funding, which AAPA members applauded.

For it to remain in effect, the FAST Act, also known as the highway bill, must be reauthorized in fiscal 2020.

About AAPA

Founded in 1912 and recognized as the unified voice of seaports in the Americas, AAPA today represents more than 130 of the leading seaport authorities in the United States, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean and more than 200 sustaining and associate members, firms and individuals with an interest in seaports. According to [IHS Markit’s World Trade Service](#), combined international sea trade moving through Western Hemisphere ports in 2017 totaled 4.303 billion metric tons in volume and US\$2.675 trillion in value. Of that total, ports in Central and South America handled 1.741 billion metric tons of cargo valued at US\$1.024 trillion, while North American ports handled 1.90 billion metric tons of goods, valued at US\$2.305 trillion. To meet the growing demand for trade, the AAPA and its members are committed to keeping seaports navigable, secure and sustainable. For more information, visit www.aapa-ports.org. On Twitter: http://twitter.com/AAPA_Seaports