January 23, 2014

The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) commends you, Committee leadership and members for your support of the Army Corps of Engineers navigation program in the fiscal year 2014 Omnibus legislation. We appreciate your vision in recognizing that funding the Corps’ navigation program to address critical maintenance and improvements in America’s seaport-related infrastructure and waterways is an investment for U. S. jobs, increased global competitiveness and the nation’s economic future.

The Corps civil works program is funded at $5.5 billion, an increase of $487 million (10 percent) above the fiscal year 2013 enacted level. Within the total, the bill provides:

- $2.3 billion for navigation projects and studies;
- $384 million above the request for essential navigation projects;
- More than $1 billion in funding from the Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT) revenues - an important milestone towards the goal of full use of HMT revenues for full channel maintenance and more donor equity.

Further, AAPA congratulates you on establishing an approach that provides for new starts of navigation construction projects and studies, the first since 2010. These projects are vital investments that will provide a solid return and the foundation for America’s 21st century waterborne freight movement infrastructure.

Enhancing America’s link to the global marketplace by creating and maintaining modern and efficient seaport and waterway infrastructure will provide significant benefits to our nation’s economic vitality, job growth, and international competitiveness, as well as creating sizable tax revenues from cargo and trade activities.

AAPA applauds your leadership in so aptly addressing navigation program needs in these fiscally constrained times.

Sincerely,

Kurt J. Nagle
President and CEO
KJN:jw/lsm