



March 6, 2012

The Honorable Janet A. Napolitano
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

As organizations that represent local ports, as well as the companies that provide solutions to support port operations, we are writing you today to raise concerns about the recent cuts to the Port Security Grant Program. Safe and secure seaport facilities are critical to protecting our borders and to moving goods.

Even though Congress reduced the budget for preparedness grants by 40 percent, we are concerned with the allocation decisions made by the department. The recently-announced cuts result in a 59 percent reduction in funding for the Port Security Grant Program and are 75 percent less than authorized by Congress in the SAFE Port Act.

This allocation will not come close to meeting local needs. It will result in continued struggles to bring port security into the 21st century and hamper meeting government mandates, such as the Transportation Worker Identity Card.

While we understand that Congress initiated this cut because of what it saw as a backlog of unspent funds, we believe such a drastic reduction of funds will have negative consequences on port security. In addition, we believe that one of the best ways to utilize existing funding is to categorically waive all cost-share requirements for grants that have already been awarded. Requiring short, individual waivers diverts the efforts of those involved from the goal of getting these projects done quickly. Grantees often put projects on hold until they receive a waiver.

We are certain there are other options available, and we would encourage your office to think through those options to help us as we help secure our ports.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Erickson'.

Don Erickson
Chief Executive Officer
Security Industry Association
www.siaonline.org

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt Nagle'.

Kurt Nagle
President and Chief Executive Officer
American Association of Port Authorities
www.aapa-ports.org

cc: The Honorable Elizabeth M. Harman, Assistant Administrator, Grant Programs Directorate, Federal Emergency Management Agency; Chairman Mary L. Landrieu, Senate Homeland Security Appropriations; Ranking Member Dan Coats, Senate Homeland Security Appropriations; Chairman Robert B. Aderholt, House Homeland Security Appropriations; Ranking Member David Price, House Homeland Security Appropriations; Chairman Candice S. Miller, House Homeland Security Committee, Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security; Ranking Member Henry Cuellar, House Homeland Security Committee, Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security