

May 16, 2019

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
425 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Wicker and Ranking Member Cantwell,

On behalf of the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA), we want to thank you for your leadership on the introduction and deliberation of the Maritime Administration Authorization and Enhancement Act of 2019 (S. 1439). AAPA is the unified voice of the port industry and is pleased to support this timely legislation.

Specifically, we strongly support the inclusion of the \$600 million authorization for the PORTS Act in this legislation. Direct investment in our port-related infrastructure is a top AAPA priority. AAPA port members have identified more than \$20 billion in projected multimodal port and rail access needs alone in the next decade, as outlined in the *State of Freight III – Rail Access and Port Multimodal Funding Needs Report*. In addition, a third of AAPA ports identified pressing rail project needs that cost more than \$50 million. In fact, rail access and first- and last-mile resources are so important to the port industry and supply chain that within the next ten years, 77 percent of ports are planning on-dock, near-dock or rail access projects. This program speaks directly to the multimodal and connectivity needs of the port industry.

Further, our 17 designated strategic ports strongly support the establishment of the Strategic Seaport Infrastructure Readiness Development Program within the Department of Defense (DoD). The mission of DoD and strategic ports is vital to keeping our country safe and ready. Ninety-five percent of the cargo deployed to support military operations moves through our strategic ports. The partnership between our nation's 17 designated strategic ports and the United States Transportation Command and MARAD is strong. This program will go a long way in providing resources to strategic ports to support and enhance the

DoD mission. Making investments to improve infrastructure at strategic seaports helps to ensure those strategic seaport facilities are in a state of good repair and have modern infrastructure, while enabling our ports to have enough readiness to support operations on 48 hours' notice.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue. AAPA looks forward to working with you and your staff to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,



Kurt J. Nagle
President and CEO

cc: The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman, Senate Appropriation Committee
The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chairwoman, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Peter Visclosky, Chairman, House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee
The Honorable Ken Calvert, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee
The Honorable Adam Smith, Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
The Honorable Mac Thornberry, Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee
The Honorable Richard Durbin, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee
The Honorable James Inhofe, Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee
The Honorable Jack Reed, Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee
The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chairman, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
The Honorable Sam Graves, Ranking Member, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Charles Schumer, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate