

May 3, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
and Related Agencies
SD-142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
c/o Allen Cutler

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
and Related Agencies
SH-125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
c/o Jennifer Eskra

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
and Related Agencies
H-310 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515
c/o Ashley Schiller

The Honorable José Serrano
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
c/o Bob Bonner

RE: Funding Support for FY 2019 NOAA Programs

Dear Chairmen Shelby and Culberson, and Ranking Members Shaheen and Serrano:

The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) represents ports throughout the United States that enable our nation to connect with the global transportation system. We are writing in support of funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Navigation, Observations, and Positioning programs as Congress considers funding levels for FY 2019. We urge you to support these essential federal programs within NOAA's National Ocean Service as well as its marine weather forecasting capabilities, including the National Data Buoy Center of NOAA's National Weather Service. We also urge you to support operations and maintenance for NOAA's aging hydrographic fleet, and to ensure NOAA's current and future investments in new vessels including new hydrographic vessels.

One particular area of concern remains the chronic underfunding for operations and maintenance of NOAA's Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System or "PORTS." The Administration's FY 2019 request is again far short of meeting federal responsibilities. We seek an additional \$10 million for the PORTS program – \$2 million for system modernization and further development and \$8 million for full federal maintenance of the system – currently being inconsistently funded. This program is vital to the safe navigation of federal waters and channels and our international competitiveness. It is a vital source of real-time information available to mariners and pilots on specific channel conditions.

We appreciate your recognition of the critical importance of ports and their vital 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kurt Nagle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kurt Nagle
President & CEO