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**House Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency  
Preparedness, Response and Communications Hearing "Ensuring the Efficiency,  
Effectiveness and Transparency of Homeland Security Grants (Part II):  
Stakeholder Perspectives**

Mr. Chairman, I am Richard Wainio, Port Director and CEO of the Tampa Port Authority. I want to thank you for the honor of providing testimony to the Subcommittee at today's hearing. We certainly appreciate your longtime support of the Port of Tampa and the maritime industry. I am pleased to be providing this testimony today on behalf of the American Association of Port Authorities.

The Port of Tampa is the largest port in Florida, both in terms of cargo tonnage and in terms of land area, as the port covers about 5,000 acres throughout our county. The security issues faced by the Port since September 11, 2001 have presented as daunting a challenge as this port has ever faced. We have gone to extraordinary lengths to implement a layered security approach that provides efficient and effective port security in a manner that is also as cost-effective as possible. That layered approach involves contracting with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office for 24/7 patrols of the port, as well as augmenting the Port Authority's own security department with private security services. Since September 11, 2001, the Tampa Port Authority has spent approximately \$86 million for security infrastructure and operating costs. Although state and federal funding helped to defer some of these costs, the majority of this total has been borne by the Tampa Port Authority. I will say that the partnerships we have with federal agencies such as U.S. Customs and Border Protection and in particular the U.S. Coast Guard have been absolutely indispensable in our ability to address the security needs of our port. That security protocol must be flexible enough to not choke off the very business it is designed to protect. So far we have been successful in that regard in not implementing measures that bottleneck the commerce of the Port. This is important, as the Port of Tampa is West Central Florida's largest economic engine, contributing almost \$8 billion in annual economic benefit to the region and supporting in some fashion almost 100,000 jobs.

Port Security grants are an essential component in assisting ports to meet important mandates under Federal law. These mandates assure a safe/secure environment required of the modern, and ever-changing, intermodal transportation system. These grants also support terminal operators and local first responders in their mission to work in partnership with ports to assure safe and secure port operations.

Many systems employed to support efficiently operated secure port operations are expensive to procure and maintain. With this in mind, the trend of reducing port grant allocations is troubling and counterproductive. It should be noted that much of this money also goes to projects that directly, or indirectly, support parallel Federal

enforcement issues, such as cruise terminal security and monitoring of high value cargo.

Shortening the grant procurement process by requiring ports to spend money at a more rapid pace will only contribute to waste of precious dollars. Many delays in the procurement process are the result of mandates imposed by the program, such as environmental assessments that are time-consuming. While certain restrictions are important, they add to the time it takes to vet and procure important equipment for projects. Each port authority is also subject to purchasing guidelines that are necessary to prevent waste and corruption, but are also time-consuming.

There is great debate about cost shares, with many pros and cons. The reality is that many port authorities already spend a significant portion of operating budgets on security-related expenses. In the case of the Tampa Port Authority, security expenses often exceed 30 percent of our annual operating budget. In tight budget times, these cost shares may make the difference in a decision to procure necessary equipment.

The plan to consolidate the Port Security Grant Program into one National Preparedness Grant Program ultimately administered by each individual state is extremely counterproductive. History has proven that interaction and oversight by the local U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port assured that funds were being distributed in a manner that best benefitted each geographic area. The U.S. Coast Guard has the training, expertise and systems in place to assess risk, threat and vulnerability; and apply this information to grant submissions. Through no fault of their own, most states do not possess this capability. Further, as state homeland grant funding diminishes, states might be tempted to stretch the intent of the port security grants to meet needs that may not be the most productive use of funds targeting the safety and security of the maritime transportation system.

While we understand that DHS has developed some improvements to their original grants model for the National Preparedness Grant program, we believe Congress should determine the funding level for the Port Security Grant program, rather than DHS. This year, Congress allowed DHS to allocate the funds and the Port Security Grant program was decreased by 59 percent to one of the lowest funding levels on record (\$97.5 million). These international maritime borders need to be a high priority. We are also concerned that Secretary Napolitano will only fund the highest risk ports. We must provide protection for all ports in order to avoid a soft underbelly of under-protected ports that terrorists could target.

In Florida we are fortunate to have a robust and well-organized regional structure to address terrorism and other issues know as the Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF). I am privileged to represent Florida ports as a member of the Domestic Security Oversight Council (DSOC), which provides guidance, and facilitates coordination, to the RDSTF program. The DSOC also forwards funding recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding the use of State Homeland Security grants. In this capacity, I am aware of the diverse variety of disciplines and

organizations that make these funding decisions, resulting in local and statewide impact. Because we currently have a separate funding source, the Florida ports are able to allow other well-deserving entities an opportunity for funding that is not related to maritime transportation, thus further defining the most important projects for consideration. Unless port security grant funds are segregated by law, I fear that we will simply create a large “pot of money” at the state level, being divided among a much larger group of disciplines, which will only serve to create a less efficient and less focused approach to funding necessary projects.

Ports represent a very unique and vital asset to the communities they serve, but they are also very complex, with issues not often shared or understood by other government agencies that compete for limited resources. I urge you to consider these important facts as you make decisions that could change a system that for the most part has provided considerable value to our ports and to our nation. Thank you.