

*AAPA supports MARAD and advocated for \$15 million in FY'20 AMH Program funding.*

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Alliance of the Ports of Canada, the Caribbean, Latin America and the United States



**AAPA Press Release**  
**January 8, 2020**

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**Chris Connor**  
**AAPA President & CEO**

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## **AAPA Cheers FY'20 Grants for America's Marine Highways**

***\$7.5 million in USDOT funds awarded to nine marine highway projects***

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (Jan. 8, 2020) – The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) ... the unified and recognized voice of America’s seaports ... is lauding the [announcement made yesterday](#) by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Maritime Administration (MARAD) that it is awarding a total of \$7.5 million to nine U.S. marine highway projects. The funding, provided by MARAD’s [America’s Marine Highway Program](#), will go towards enhancing existing services in the states of Florida, South Carolina, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Oregon, Texas, Virginia and Washington.

“AAPA supports MARAD’s America’s Marine Highways Program, and [advocated for a \\$15 million funding level](#) for the program in fiscal 2020,” remarked [Chris Connor](#), AAPA’s president and CEO. “This program is an asset that enables ports and port communities to fully realize their potential in managing increasing freight volumes while reducing traffic congestion.

He added: “Ports throughout the country with marine highway designations have reported that this program provides an important option in utilizing waterways and incorporating this tool into their freight network.”

In the final FY’20 spending bill signed by the president in December, MARAD’s America’s Marine Highways (AMH) Program received \$9.775 million in funding, which was nearly \$3 million more than it had received for FY’19.

Five of the nine AMH programs awarded grants involve AAPA-member ports. They are:

- **The Baton Rouge-New Orleans Shuttle** (awarded \$1,040,000)  
Sponsored by SEACOR AMH, the grant will be used to purchase six purpose-built barges and lease one towboat. The vessels will be used to increase the capacity of the Port Allen to New Orleans container shuttle and help stimulate the U.S. shipbuilding industry on America's inland waterways.
- **Lake Erie Shuttle** (awarded \$1,101,735)  
Sponsored by Michigan's Port of Monroe, the grant will be used to support the Lake Erie Shuttle Service, including the purchase and installation of a crawler crane and the training associated with its use.
- **Port of Morrow Barge Service Expansion** (awarded \$1,623,200)  
Sponsored by the Port of Morrow, on the Columbia River in Oregon, the grant will be used to support the expansion of barge services between the Port of Morrow and the AAPA-member ports in Portland (OR), Vancouver (WA) and Longview (WA). The expansion will include enhancement of two marine terminals that will ultimately allow the Port of Morrow greater access to the region, increasing the economic potential in this rural area.
- **Houston Gateway and Gulf Container on Barge Central Node** (awarded \$180,000)  
Sponsored by the Port of Houston Authority, the grant will support the development of an Operational Plan. The planning efforts and outcomes from this study will provide the necessary data to establish a business case to support shipping container movements by barge between Port Houston terminals.
- **James River Expansion Project** (awarded \$189,840)  
Sponsored by The Port of Virginia, the grant will be used to purchase equipment in support of the existing James River Expansion Project. The equipment will help The Port of Virginia's Richmond Marine Terminal provide a more efficient barge service operation to current and potential customers.

In addition to its America's Marine Highways Program advocacy, AAPA supports MARAD through:

- Harbor Maintenance Tax exemptions for specific U.S. port-to-port cargo;
- Federal funding to support the return of transshipment cargo service to U.S. mainland ports;

- Use of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program to fund projects for marine highway services;
- Incentives for maritime cargo shippers (e.g., green tax credit).

The cargo activities through America's deep-draft ports in 2018 represented 26 percent of U.S. GDP, supported employment of nearly 31 million American jobs, and generated \$378 billion in local, state and federal taxes.

“Seaports are a crucial part of our nation's transportation infrastructure and serve as vital freight gateways to the global marketplace,” said Mr. Connor. “Because ports are the hub for trade and transportation, AAPA will continue to aggressively advocate that direct federal investment in, and grants for, port-related infrastructure be a high priority in future annual federal appropriations. We look forward to engaging with Congress and the Administration to secure the necessary funds and policies that enable seaports to continue driving economic growth and opportunity.”

#### ***About AAPA***

*Founded in 1912 and recognized as the unified voice of seaports in the Americas, AAPA today represents 140 of the leading seaport authorities in the United States, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean and more than 250 sustaining and associate members, firms and individuals with an interest in seaports. Cargo activities at U.S. seaports account for 26 percent of the U.S. economy, generating nearly \$5.4 trillion in total economic activity and more than \$378 billion in federal, state and local taxes in 2018. To meet the growing demand for trade, AAPA and its members are committed to keeping seaports navigable, secure and sustainable.*

Seaports  
Deliver  
Prosperity

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