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AAPA Press Release
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”

Chris Connor, AAPA President and CEO

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AAPA Urges More Funding for Port Infrastructure Development Program

Senate cut of nearly 70 percent falls well short of needs



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The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) ... the unified and recognized voice of America’s seaports ... is very concerned with the U.S. Senate’s approval today of a fiscal 2020 appropriations

bill that cuts funding by more than two-thirds to a U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration (MARAD) program that provides critical grants for port infrastructure projects nationwide.

MARAD’s [Port Infrastructure Development Program](#), initiated last year and funded at \$292.73 million, would be slashed to \$91.6 million if the Senate’s appropriation mark is upheld in the final bill. Not only would funding for the program be severely cut, the Senate bill requires deep-draft coastal ports and shallow-draft inland waterways ports share those funds, which wasn’t the case last year. AAPA advocates that the program be funded at a minimum of \$300 million for deep-draft coastal ports.

AAPA will fight hard to achieve a higher funding level for the program in the final Congressional negotiations for the

bill. The House approved \$225 million for the program in FY 2020.

“It’s critical that the U.S. invest in its port infrastructure to address growing trade, which is the lifeblood of our economy” remarked [Chris Connor](#), AAPA’s president and CEO. “MARAD’s Port Infrastructure Development Program is the first and only federal grant program dedicated to our nation’s ports, and direct investment into port-related infrastructure is a top AAPA priority.”

America’s deep-draft ports support employment of nearly 31 million American jobs, \$378 billion in taxes and 26 percent of U.S. GDP.

“Seaports are a crucial part of our nation’s transportation infrastructure and serve as vital freight gateways to the global marketplace for our military and for American farmers, manufacturers, retailers and consumers,” said Mr. Connor.

Other [USDOT grant programs that ports support](#) in today’s Senate appropriations allocations include the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program, the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program, the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) program, and MARAD’s America’s Marine Highways program.

“Because ports are the center of trade and transportation, AAPA will continue to aggressively advocate that port-related infrastructure programs be a high priority in annual federal appropriations. We look forward to working with Congress and the Administration to secure the funds needed that enable seaports to continue delivering prosperity,” said Mr. Connor.

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.

American Association of Port Authorities

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