

For Immediate Release

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Ohio's Great Lakes Ports and Maritime Leaders Meet with State Legislators

Dialogue aimed at demonstrating value & growth potential of Ohio's maritime economy and global connections through Great Lakes & St. Lawrence Seaway

Cleveland, Ohio (January 25, 2017) – This week, the Port of Cleveland and other members of the Great Lakes Seaway Partnership (GLSPA) traveled to the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus, Ohio to engage Governor Kasich's office and members of the General Assembly. The dialogue focused on how to build on the strength of Ohio's maritime economy. The effort marked the first day dedicated to ports and maritime at the Statehouse, setting the stage for future policy making efforts to leverage the global commerce connections afforded via the state's strategic location on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway System.

With economic impact in the billions, Ohio's maritime sector is a driver of jobs and wealth for the state that has grown significantly over time. During the sessions with legislators, GLSPA stakeholders provided important data and insights on that economic impact, as well as the efficiency and environmental benefits of maritime shipping.

Recent national conversation during and after the presidential election on the potential for significant investments in infrastructure also made the conversations timely. Ohio ports and the Seaway system have made strategic investments over time, but the state lags behind others with regard to proactively funding maritime commerce.

Policy discussions with General Assembly members were wide ranging, including everything from investment in port capital projects and harbor maintenance funding to improving locks in the Seaway system, regulation of ballast water, and beneficial approaches to dredging disposal.

Public sector participants in the dialogue included: The Port of Cleveland; American Great Lakes Ports Association; Lorain Port Authority; Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority; The Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corp. Private industry representatives included:

ArcelorMittal Cleveland; American Steamship Company; Fednav Limited; Interlake Steamship Company; Lake Carriers Association.

“The Port of Cleveland is excited to be part of this important dialogue with our state legislators on how we can continue to leverage the economic potential of our maritime sector,” said Will Friedman. “Northeast Ohio’s maritime economy supports over 20,000 jobs and produces over \$3.5 billion of total annual economic value – a figure that has grown 30% recently. We’re confident that those numbers, and those of our sister port communities, will continue to grow strongly with the help of smart, innovative state policy making.”

The Port of Cleveland is a key to Northeast Ohio’s global competitiveness, providing the quickest route between North American’s Heartland and Northern Europe and linking the region to the world. An economic engine for Northeast Ohio, the Port brings over 13-million tons of cargo through the Cleveland Harbor, resulting in \$3.5 billion in annual economic activity and more than 20,000 jobs. As a Green Port on a Great Lake, the Port of Cleveland plays a leading role in the environmental restoration and revitalization of Lake Erie and the Cuyahoga River, and helps to create vibrant, accessible waterfronts for all.

For more information, please visit the Port website at: www.portofcleveland.com.