

CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **H.B. No. 1043, AN ACT CONCERNING STATE-WIDE TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE-WIDE PORT AUTHORITY**

Chairmen Maynard and Guerrera, Senator Boucher, Representative Scribner Representative Sayer and Distinguished Members.

The Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) and our 340 member businesses urge you to support **H.B. No. 1043, AN ACT CONCERNING STATE-WIDE TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE-WIDE PORT AUTHORITY**. Connecticut's three deep-water ports, New London, New Haven and Bridgeport are one of Connecticut's most valued maritime assets. Currently underused and needing dredging, expanded berthing facilities, and the installation of cranes etc., they have the potential of rivaling for business that presently goes to our neighbors here in New England. Major highway, ferry service, and rail service located in the cities of New Haven, New London and Bridgeport make the potential of our ports even greater!

Control of the state's commercial waterfront is with Connecticut's Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aviation and Ports. The Connecticut Maritime Commission is the primary body within the State of Connecticut to develop and recommend maritime policy to the Governor and the General Assembly. It is responsible for developing and updating a long-term strategic plan for all ports and waterways in the State of Connecticut with a focus on the aforementioned three deep-water ports. While a Maritime Commission deals with strategy and policy, hands-on management of the ports should fall under a Port Authority as it does in many other Northeast states.

This initiative would have the Department of Transportation develop a Connecticut Port Authority with assistance from the Department of Economic and Community Development and other interested stakeholders. The primary job of a Port Authority is to not only manage the ports but to market them and generate the business that will utilize each port to its best capability. It is a critical issue that the people serving on this newly formed CPA be the right people and that there be great due diligence in the selection process. They must be marketing oriented and motivated to use their marketing skills to advance the interests of each port. Also too, is the importance of prompt & significant initial funding that would ensure that the authority gets off to an aggressive beginning. And this commitment by the State has to be enduring and outside of the political arena.

We urge you again to support **H.B. No. 1043, AN ACT CONCERNING STATE-WIDE TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE-WIDE PORT AUTHORITY**. Proper personnel and prompt funding and a focus on marketing and success will grow the three Connecticut ports. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

John S. Johnson
Legislative Chair

Grant W. Westerson
President

Linda A. Kowalski
The Kowalski Group