



2021 Position Paper

EXPAND PORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT GRANT FUNDING

Summary:

In 2010, Congress authorized a Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) to be administered by the U.S. Maritime Administration. While the program remained unfunded for many years, Congress provided first-year funds of \$293 million in the FY2019 Consolidated Appropriations Act. Congress continued program funding at \$225 million in FY2020 and \$230 million in FY2021. In three short years, the PIDP program has become a critical source of federal assistance to reconstruct docks, improve road and rail access, expand storage capacity and modernized cargo handling equipment. To date, six Great Lakes ports have received more than \$76 million for critical infrastructure investments.

AGLPA Position:

AGLPA strongly supports continued funding for the Port Infrastructure Development Grant Program and urges Congress to include \$500 million for the program in the FY2022 Transportation Appropriations Bill.

Additional Background:

While the United States has federal grant programs for aviation, highway, rail and public transportation infrastructure, there has not been a federal assistance program specifically targeted at port infrastructure. Ports are eligible to apply for U.S. Department of Transportation "BUILD" and "INFRA" grants, but often find themselves competing with other important airport, highway or mass transit priorities in their communities. For this reason, a dedicated port infrastructure grant program is attractive.

In 2010, Congress enacted legislation (P.L. 111-84) to create a Port Infrastructure Development Program within the U.S. Department of Transportation/Maritime Administration. Known as "StrongPorts," the program's goal is to assist local port stakeholders as they work to improve the movement of freight. This assistance may include planning, project oversight, technical assistance, expediting environmental reviews, coordinating with other federal agencies, and issuing grants.

In 2019, Congress passed the Ports Improvement Act, as part of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2020. This legislation updated and enhanced the original 2010 program. The new authorization improves the program's focus, establishes non-federal cost share requirements, clarifies use of grant funds, ensures a fair distribution of grant awards, and authorizes a funding level of \$500 million in FY2021. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2021 increased the program's funding level to \$750 million for FY2022.

In its first two rounds of grant making (in 2019 & 2020) the Maritime Administration awarded PIDP grants to six Great Lakes ports as follows:

Duluth Seaway Port Authority:	\$10.5 million
Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority:	\$16 million
Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority:	\$11 million
Port Milwaukee:	\$15.89 million
Ports of Indiana:	\$4 million
Port of Conneaut:	\$19.5 million
Great Lakes Total:	\$76.89 million