



2023 Position Paper

FUND PORT INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

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; \$230 million in FY2021; \$234 million in FY2022, and \$212 million in FY2023. On top of this funding baseline, between FY2022-26 the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provides an additional \$2.25 billion for the program or roughly \$450 million/year.

In five 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, twelve Great Lakes ports have received more than \$154.53 million for critical infrastructure investments.

AGLPA Position:

Great Lakes ports strongly support continued funding for the Port Infrastructure Development Grant program and urge Congress to include \$300 million - the President's budget request - in the FY2024 Transportation and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill. Great Lakes ports also support a change of law to make cruise-related infrastructure eligible for up to 5 percent of annual program grants.

Additional Background:

While the United States has federal grant programs for aviation, highway, rail and public transportation infrastructure, until recently there had not been a federal assistance program specifically targeted at port infrastructure. Ports are eligible to apply for U.S. Department of Transportation "RAISE" 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. 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 improved the program's focus, established non-federal cost share requirements, clarified use of grant funds, and ensured a fair distribution of grant awards. Subsequent authorizing legislation has increased the program's authorized funding level to \$750 million.

In its first four rounds of grant making (2019-2022) the Maritime Administration awarded PIDP grants to ten Great Lakes ports as follows:

2019

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

2020

Ports of Indiana/Burns Harbor:	\$4 million
Port of Conneaut:	\$19.5 million

2021

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority:	\$3 million
Marquette, Michigan:	\$1.6 million
Alpena, Michigan:	\$3.7 million
Superior, Wisconsin:	\$8.4 million

2022

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority:	\$27.2 million
Port of Green Bay:	\$10.1 million
Port of Monroe:	\$11.1 million
Detroit-Wayne County Port Authority:	\$16 million
Great Lakes Total:	\$154.53 million

Cruise Infrastructure

One of the most exciting developments in Great Lakes shipping is growth in our cruise sector. In recent years, cruise ship operators have discovered the beauty of the Great Lakes, the cultural resources in our major cities, and the charm of our small shoreline communities.

Because cruise activity is relatively new at Great Lakes ports, most harbors lack appropriate passenger infrastructure. It is not uncommon for Great Lakes cruise passengers to disembark at gritty industrial docks adjacent to piles of bulk and breakbulk cargo. Some ports lack adequate lighting, utilities or security systems. Many communities have struggled to find funding to address these infrastructure needs.

Current law limits PIDP grants to those projects that enhance the "movement of goods." For this reason, cruise and passenger facilities are currently ineligible. We ask that Congress modify the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) to make passenger facilities eligible for up to 5 percent of annual grant awards.