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Contact: Jeff Agnew
(202) 828-9100

Freight Coalition Member Pelliccio Testifies on Need for Targeted Freight Investment

Ports America/ Port Newark Container Terminal Executive Addresses ‘Economic Multiplier’ of Freight Investment Before Senate Subcommittee

WASHINGTON, DC (April 4, 2017) – Addressing a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, Port Newark Container Terminal (PNCT) President & CEO James Pelliccio today called for increased federal funding to support goods movement. Noting that our infrastructure must meet the demands of a growing global economy and population, Mr. Pelliccio said competitive grant programs, such as the Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects (FASTLANE) and TIGER programs, are able to assist in funding large-scale infrastructure projects, spanning modes and jurisdictional borders, which are difficult to fund through traditional distribution methods such as formula programs.

Representing Ports America/ PNCT as well as the Coalition for America’s Gateways & Trade Corridors (the Coalition) at today’s hearing, Pelliccio cited the benefits of and distinctions between the FASTLANE and TIGER competitive grant programs, calling such programs a down payment on our nation’s infrastructure needs. Competitive grants frequently drive down the federal share through creative financing arrangements, private sector participation, and strong non-federal matching. One such example is Essex County, New Jersey’s TIGER award for the Port Newark Terminal Access Improvement Project, which flipped the traditional 80/20 formula match on its head: 30 percent of funding came from the federal government, and 70 percent was from private industry.

“Freight mobility – on all modes – requires added capacity and improved efficiency to keep pace with growing demands. Connectivity among the modes is key to the efficient movement of goods,” said Pelliccio. “The benefits of freight movement accrue nationally, and as such, there is a federal responsibility to be a partner in making improvements, and in many instances, there is an opportunity for private sector contributions.”

Recognizing that Congress and the Administration are considering a large-scale infrastructure program, Pelliccio called on Congress to provide dedicated, sustainable and flexible funding to bolster investment in multimodal goods movement infrastructure. In addition, he called for a partnership with the private sector and a national strategy that guides funding and planning.

“Every industry sector relies upon the safe, reliable and cost-effective conveyance of goods and services,” said Coalition Executive Director Elaine Nessle. “Investment in freight infrastructure yields a high return on federal investment and enables us to be competitive in the global marketplace.”

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About the Coalition
The Coalition for America’s Gateways and Trade Corridors (CAGTC) is a diverse coalition of more than 60 public and private organizations dedicated to increasing federal investment in America’s intermodal freight infrastructure. In contrast to single mode interests, CAGTC’s main mission is to promote a seamless goods movement transportation system across all modes to enhance capacity and economic growth. For more information on the Coalition for America’s Gateways and Trade Corridors, please visit www.tradecorridors.org.