

JAXPORT

August 3, 2020

Port Canaveral

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
 Majority Leader
 U.S. Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
 Minority Leader
 U.S. Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

Port Everglades

Dear Senate President McConnell and Leader Schumer:

Port of Fernandina

As you finalize the next COVID-19 relief package, we want to provide you with our latest analysis of the potential impacts of COVID-19 on Florida seaports and the state's economy.

Port of Fort Pierce

Florida seaports are one of the state's greatest economic assets, positively affecting every region and every resident. Whether moving over a hundred million tons of cargo annually or millions of U.S. and international cruise passengers, Florida's seaports generate and support a vast array of commerce. These seaports are the gateway for shipment of goods into and out of Florida, and link our state to vital international markets. Prior to this pandemic, our seaports had a \$117.6 billion economic impact on the state and accounted for more than 900,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Port of Key West

PortMiami

Port Manatee

Based on an analysis conducted by Martin Associates, an internationally recognized leading economic and transportation economic analysis firm, it is estimated that the nearly **169,000 jobs** supported by port activity around the state could be lost. A survey and review of cargo and passenger activity at Florida's seaports indicated that COVID-19 will likely result in the loss of 5.6 million tons of liquid bulk cargo, 1.6 million tons of dry bulk cargo, and a loss of 4.9 million passengers at our seaports. The loss in total economic activity in the state of Florida resulting from the loss of cargo and cruise activity at Florida seaports is estimated at almost **\$23 billion**.

Port of Palm Beach

Port of Panama City

Port of Pensacola

As you know, no funding has been provided in any of the previous COVID-19 relief packages to assist ports and the maritime transportation system. We urge you to consider maritime transportation sector emergency relief. **We recommend that not less than \$1.5 billion be made available to U.S. seaports, and not less than \$2 billion for other eligible maritime business involved in the essential operation of this nation's maritime transportation system.** Such funds could be used for emergency response, cleaning, staffing, workforce retention, paid leave, procurement of protective health equipment, debt service payments, and lost revenue. These vital

Port of Port St. Joe

Port St. Pete

Port Tampa Bay

emergency relief funds will close a huge gap in current federal emergency assistance that has left critical links in the maritime supply chain isolated.

Your support of an investment/recovery program for U.S. seaports will ensure the continued flow of goods and commerce and will have a substantial impact on the economic recovery of both the state of the Florida and the nation. If we can provide any further information or answer any questions to help in the development of a program for seaports, please contact us contact me at Doug@Flaports.org or by phone at 850.322.8850.

Sincerely,



Doug Wheeler,
President & CEO