

Written Testimony – Senate Finance Committee

House Bill 96 Budget Testimony

Port of Cleveland and Port of Toledo

May 27, 2025

Chairman Cirino, Vice-Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for allowing the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority (Port of Cleveland) and the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority (Port of Toledo) to submit written testimony in support of the Ohio Maritime Assistance Program (OMAP).

The Ohio Legislature, through the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), created the Maritime Assistance Program (MAP) in 2020 to assist water Public Port Authorities established under Chapter 4582 of the Ohio Revised Code. These Port Authorities must own active public marine cargo terminals, or the port authority is in, or has jurisdiction within, a federally qualified opportunity zone and the federally qualified opportunity zone has an active public marine cargo terminal with a stevedoring operation that is located on the shore of Lake Erie or the Ohio river. The programs selection criteria evaluated the overall readiness for construction, the ability to move new or greater volumes of cargo, meet an identified supply chain need, benefit Ohio firms that export goods to foreign markets, or import goods to Ohio for use in manufacturing. Projects included business justification, schedule and minimum 50% match the request for funding.

To date, the program has committed \$56 million: leveraging an additional \$145 million for a total investment exceeding \$200 million in marine Port infrastructure and equipment. Investments have been made across 21 projects within 4 Public Port Authorities on Lake Erie and the Ohio River. The capital investments span State Fiscal Years 2020-2025 for projects supporting maritime cargo transportation infrastructure. Applications were awarded on a competitive basis to projects that will have a significant impact on Ohio's logistics supply chain. The projects support dock rehabilitations, access roads, mooring cells, sediment processing facilities, cargo storage facilities, ore tunnel extension, transloading equipment, riverbank stabilization and intermodal transportation infrastructure. Ohio's maritime ports are a vital part of both Ohio's economy and our infrastructure. The Port of Cleveland employs or supports approximately 23,000 jobs with an annual total personal income impact of \$1.89 million paid to local and state governments. The Port of Cleveland provides \$7.07 billion annual economic value to the

region. The Port of Cleveland also provides direct access to all major highways and access to major railways, allowing for the impact of cargo carried into the Port to impact the entire state of Ohio and our country. The Port of Toledo employs or supports approximately 18,000 total jobs with an annual total personal income impact of \$1.28 billion. The Port of Toledo provides \$6.2 billion annually in economic value to the region.

Projects approved in previous fiscal years include dock extensions and crane purchases at East Liverpool in Columbia County, a bulk storage building and transloading equipment in Wellsville, dock improvements and barge cells in Clarington, which are all located on the Ohio River. The program has also supported larger ports on Lake Erie, including cargo warehouse storage and industrial road and retaining wall construction in Toledo and bulk terminal ore conveyance tunnel extension and Dock 24 and 26 rehabilitations in Cleveland.

Many competing states in the United States are providing significant financial assistance to their Maritime ports to provide updates and improvements that will allow them to continue to provide port services while remaining competitive with the cost of off-loading, storing and transporting these valuable resources. Ocean barring ports, while significantly more congested, continue to invest in their infrastructure. In September of 2024, the State of Pennsylvania awarded a \$217 million grant to the Port of Philadelphia. In January of this year, the State of New York announced that up to \$102 million in grant funding was made available to their ports. Ohio MUST keep up to remain competitive.

The Ohio House provided \$8 million in funding to continue this vital program. Amendment SC1578 has been submitted to fund this program at \$10 million each fiscal year. This important amendment will allow Ohio's ports to continue to compete with other ports throughout the country. We ask that you accept this amendment that will continue to allow Ohio ports to compete and excel.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony. We are happy to meet with members and staff of this committee to provide further details and information.

Sincerely,

David Gutheil

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Gutheil", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Interim President & CEO/CCO

Port of Cleveland

Joe Cappel

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Cappel", with a large, stylized initial "J" and a flourish.

Vice-President, Business Development

Port of Toledo

SC1578

Am. Sub. H. B. No. 96
As Passed by the House

_____ moved to amend as follows:

In the table on line 138833, in row J, delete "\$4,000,000" and insert "\$10,000,000 \$10,000,000"

In the table on line 138833, in rows K and L, add \$6,000,000 to each fiscal year

In line 139868, delete "\$8,000,000" and insert "\$20,000,000"

The motion was _____ agreed to.

SYNOPSIS

Department of Transportation

Sections 411.10 and 512.10

Increases Fund 5QT0 ALI 776670, Ohio Maritime Assistance Program, by \$6,000,000 in each fiscal year.

Increases the amount of cash the OBM Director is required to transfer from the GRF to Fund 5QT0 in FY 2026 by \$12,000,000.

Legislative Service Commission



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