

**TESTIMONY OF LORRIE LOUDER  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC  
SAFETY**

**OVERVIEW OF MINNESOTA'S PORTS AND WATERWAYS  
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2015**

Mr. Chair, members, my name is Lorrie Louder. I am the Senior Vice President of Business and Intergovernmental Affairs for the St. Paul Port Authority. The Port Development Assistance Program allows our public ports to maintain critical infrastructure so that we can continue to facilitate the movement of products in and out of the State of Minnesota through the Great Lakes and Upper Mississippi Waterway Systems.

The efficient transshipment of cargo through Minnesota ports benefits many sectors of our state economy and the Port Development Assistance Program has been the primary means by which we have maintained our port infrastructure.

You have just heard from the Red Wing Port Authority about their facilities and you will hear shortly from the Seaway Port Authority of Duluth about theirs'. I'd like to tell you about how Port Development Assistance Program funding has benefitted some of our state's other ports.

The Port of Winona removed a sunken barge which was disrupting the movement of traffic to and from their commercial dock. They have replaced barge mooring facilities and constructed a new mooring cell and rehabilitated their existing commercial dock wall. Winona also received Port Development funds for a dredging project which became part of a multi-modal transportation improvement project for their community. Each of these upgrades has contributed to improved service and capability for the Winona Port.

At my Port in St. Paul we have rehabilitated warehouse roofs, repaired several areas of the dock walls, dredged a barge fleeting area, upgraded a barge mooring site and addressed transportation access by rehabilitation railroad crossings and road access to port facilities. Very little of this work could have been accomplished without state financial participation through the Port Development Assistance Program.

Looking to the 2015 Session, each of our four public ports have important projects to complete:

- St. Paul's priority is on dock wall improvements.
- Winona is seeking support for heavy dock lift capabilities.
- Red Wing is looking to establish a new commercial transient dock.
- Duluth wants to finish rebuilding its C & D Dock.

With the closing of the Minneapolis Port, maintaining and improving our remaining public ports is going to be even more critical this biennium. We see this as an exciting opportunity for the Saint Paul Port to grow by retaining much of the activity previously conducted at the Minneapolis Port here in the Twin Cities. It is vital for the state's economic health to continue to have the ability to ship the large quantities of coal, cement, sand, salt, and agricultural products that currently move in and out of the Twin Cities. It will now be even more imperative that the Saint Paul Port be equipped to handle what we expect to be increased volume. With your continued support, all of Minnesota's Ports will address our backlog of infrastructure projects to provide for the continued low cost transshipment of Minnesota commodities via our waterways.

In closing, I'd like to quote a former member of the Minnesota Ports Association, retired Duluth Port Director Davis Helberg, who said, "waterborne commerce uses less energy, causes less environmental degradation, generates less waste disposal, is responsible for fewer accidents, creates the least societal disruption and is almost always cheaper."

Again, thank you for your past support and I would be pleased to respond to questions you may have regarding the Port Development Assistance Program.