



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alabama State Port Authority Director Tapped For National Marine Transportation Council

Mobile, Ala. – August 29, 2011. James K. Lyons, director and chief executive for the Alabama State Port Authority has been named to the Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council (MTSNAC). U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced the appointment of Lyons on Friday, along with nearly 30 transportation professionals from across the country. Lyons is Alabama's only representative to the council that will advise the Department on matters relating to marine transportation.

"Shifting some of our freight from the highways to open inland waterways is a fuel-efficient, cost-effective way to move goods and reduce roadway congestion," said Secretary LaHood. "The recommendations developed by the Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council will help us increase transportation efficiency, improve the environment and grow the economy." The Department will task the MTSNAC with developing recommendations on establishing new marine highway services and port infrastructure development, among other issues.

Lyons has led the state's seaport since 1999 and has overseen \$700 million in seaport modernization programs to support cargo diversification and growth at the Port of Mobile. Key investments at the port have focused on innovation and technology to attract new manufacturing and transportation investments in the region. The Alabama State Port Authority's terminals are one of the nation's best transportation logistics hubs where five Class 1 railroads, two Interstate systems and one of the nation's largest inland waterway networks converge.

"It's an honor to be chosen by Secretary LaHood to serve on this distinguished body," Lyons said. "Optimizing and improving efficiencies in the nation's ports and on the waterways is vital to the nation's economic prosperity. I am looking forward to the challenge of optimizing this country's maritime resources for jobs creation and economic growth."

Lyons is a member of the board of Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta's Birmingham Branch and the National Waterways Council. The Alabama State Port Authority, headquartered in Mobile, Ala., owns and operates the State of Alabama's deepwater port facilities at the Port of Mobile and its public facilities handled 24 million tons of cargo last year.

###