



EMBARGOED for 7:30 p.m. (Central)

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BAYPORT: RIGHT LOCATION, CRUCIAL TO HOUSTON-REGION ECONOMIC GROWTH

Facts Show Economic Progress and Environmental Protection Can Coexist

HOUSTON, December 12, 2001 – Bayport is the best location for a new container and cruise terminal complex that is vital for the continuing health of the Houston-region economy, Port of Houston Authority Chairman James. T. Edmonds said this evening at the U.S. Corps of Engineers public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project. “Bayport will strengthen the Houston area’s competitiveness in international trade and provide thousands of jobs and expanded consumer choices from international commerce,” he added.

“Without Bayport, the ships will not come, the jobs will not come, and the taxes will not come. This region’s economic future depends on building Bayport,” Edmonds said.

“There is a lot of misinformation circulating about this project, but when you look at all the facts, Bayport is the right location for this facility – environmentally, logistically, commercially, and socially,” he said. In his presentation, Edmonds noted:

- Fact #1: The Port of Houston is determined to be a good – and responsible – neighbor. The Port has listened to citizens concerns and scores of significant modifications were made to accommodate residents’ requests on subjects ranging from traffic flows to buffer zones and noise-reducing 20-foot-tall berms. “We care about the same things neighbors do. We are committed to these programs and more. Our record speaks volumes,” Edmonds said.
- Fact #2: The Bayport project will set new global standards for environmental responsibility, whether in wetland development, wildlife habitat improvement or operational sensitivity, demonstrating that economic progress and environmental protection can coexist. Almost one-fourth of the land involved in the project – more than 200 acres – will be dedicated to environmental protection and

enhancement. “I assure you, no one else who potentially would use this land will do as much,” Edmonds said.

- Fact #3: The Bayport Terminal will provide nearly 12,000 new jobs in the first 10 years and will have an economic impact of \$1 billion. At full build-out, Bayport will be the catalyst for 39,000 new jobs with an economic impact of \$3.3 billion. Edmonds said it also will boost the Port and Houston’s competitiveness for international trade.

“When you combine these kinds of numbers with environmentally responsible operation, and when you look at all the facts, Bayport is the right location for this facility,” Edmonds said.

Houston is a gateway to a growing market of more than 30 million people and is a natural for a facility like Bayport, which will help meet the growing demand for cargo shipped in containers. By the end of this decade, 90 percent of products used in homes and businesses daily will arrive in containers.

Shipping lines will take their containers where there is room and where there are markets. The Port is out of space and cannot meet this growing demand for container cargo.

“In conclusion, Bayport is needed. It is the right location and it’s the right time. We are really building our own future,” Edmonds said. “We will continue to listen to our neighbors. And we will do our part to keep our region strong, secure and moving forward.”

About the Port of Houston Authority

The Port of Houston Authority owns and operates the public facilities along the Port of Houston, a 25-mile-long complex of diversified public and private facilities that handle more than 175 million short tons of freight worth more than \$60 billion annually. The Port Authority plays a vital role in ensuring navigation safety along the Houston Ship Channel, a key economic catalyst for the city since the Port of Houston first opened to deep-water vessels in 1914. The Port is the source of more than 200,000 direct and related jobs and generates about \$525 million annually in state and local taxes. The Port of Houston ranks first in the U.S. in foreign waterborne commerce and second in total tonnage. Each year, more than 7,000 vessels from around the world call at the Port.

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