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Big money-waster

Frank Sheffield Jr., in his pitch for the North Carolina International Terminal, touted the great "visionary projects" North Carolina has engaged in over the years ("N.C. can create the next great port," June 4 Point of View article). It's curious that he neglects to mention Global TransPark, the Randy Parton Theatre and the Teapot Museum, truer parallels to the proposed megaport.

He continues, "the land would provide nearby deepwater access" for the largest vessels in the world. Again, he neglects to mention the cost to create that deepwater access, since it does not currently exist. The price to taxpayers, conservatively, is \$1.2 billion in dredging and devastating environmental consequences.

With audacity, he suggests that few other East Coast ports can accommodate these vessels. Really? Charleston, Baltimore and Hampton Roads are already deepwater ports with infrastructure in place. The Ports Authority's wild theory that they will capture business from these existing ports contradicts its own consultants.

It's time to abandon this misguided and abusive waste of taxpayer dollars and move on to the job of truly creating jobs.

Toby Bronstein

Caswell Beach

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Unimaginable port

Regarding a recent article on your Other Opinion page endorsing the proposed deepwater port next to the Brunswick nuclear plant near Southport, I heartily disagree with the writer's calculations. As an unbiased observer of the proposal, I see the cons far outweighing the pros to the residents of North Carolina.

After reading your objective report on your May 30 front page, I am amazed that any state leaders, let alone Gov. Bev Perdue, would back this environmental disaster waiting to happen. Whatever happened to common sense?

If the millions of gallons of water that it takes to cool Brunswick's two nuclear reactors become polluted with corrosive or fouling chemicals, what might happen? If a terrorist organization manages to get a nuclear device aboard one of these international super freighters and park it near the Brunswick nuclear plant, what might happen? Add to that the Cape Fear River will have to be continually deeply dredged, at a cost of billions of dollars over the years of operation and the costs to the N.C. ecosystem, how could anyone in their right mind be for this?

John Healey

Cary

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Barging ahead

The N.C. Ports Authority's proposed megaport on the outskirts of Southport has aroused significant informed opposition because it is a looming economic and environmental disaster. Recovery of the billions of investment dollars is highly uncertain. Hundreds of acres of marshland would be destroyed. The impact on the quiet and historic town of Southport would be a catastrophe.

Tom Eager, head of the Ports Authority, recently was reported in The N&O as dismissing local critics as know-nothings and transplants. This attitude echoes a public hearing I attended where authority officials treated the audience with arrogance and condescension despite being woefully uninformed. Clearly they were on a public relations mission, not prepared to answer serious questions about the impact of the port on traffic, pollution, wetlands and the community.

Before wasting \$10 million in taxpayer dollars on a planned feasibility study, the Ports Authority should listen seriously to citizens and experts who see the port as little more than an ego trip for Eager. Indeed, Eager has shown himself unfit to manage a project of this scope which requires, among other things, the ability to listen and to address real issues with some level of objectivity.

Jerry VanSant

Chapel Hill

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Port pros and cons

Thanks for the May 30 report on the status of the proposed International Terminal to be located on our coast. Your reporter clearly explained both the support and opposition for the port as well as the decision that faces our elected officials concerning a pledge of significant financial support. N.C. taxpayers are being asked to provide almost \$5 million for a study of the effect of the port, which, given the issues raised by the opposition, seems to be an ill-advised step in current economic conditions.

The most disturbing aspects of the article were the statements from Tom Eagar, head of the State Ports Authority, who dismissed the critics as a very small, extremely biased, misinformed group of folks who are new to North Carolina. The truth is that Eagar is misinformed, as a visit to the website of the NoPortSouthport group will make abundantly clear. This group has done extensive research on this issue and is made up of individuals who grew up in this great state as well as those who have moved to N.C.

Burke Hobgood

Durham