



NoPort News

A newsletter of the North Carolina International Terminal

All the news that prints to fit.

June 13, 2010

*Put not your trust in princes, bureaucrats or generals, they will
plead expedience while spilling your blood from a safe distance.
—Niccolò Machiavelli*

A Matter of Trust

On June 3, the North Carolina House of Representatives adopted an amendment to the budget bill, S897, prohibiting use of State funds for the proposed North Carolina International Terminal. The amendment was passed overwhelmingly—104 in favor, 11 against.

The original Senate bill did not have that restriction, so the matter must be reconciled in conference. We understand that the prospective conferees and other members are under intense pressure from the State Ports Authority to eliminate the restriction in the final bill.

And why? So they can move the project along without legislative oversight. Commit the State to a study run by the Corps of Engineers, at huge expense to the State but no control by the State. At the end is \$720 million expense for the State, the State share of the \$1.2 billion dredging cost, to support a \$1.4 billion project which will also need a \$270 million highway.

Can we trust the Corps of Engineers? In a word, no. The Wilmington District of the Corps has just spent \$100,000 on a secret ‘reconnaissance study’ and refuses to disclose the result. We have obtained the draft report, and it is superficial and biased, intended to advance the Corps’ agenda but not the public’s. Look it up on our Web site. Our analysis is there, too.

Can we trust the State Ports Authority? This is another example of a breach of public trust to drive its own agenda—a grand, glorious, ill-conceived vanity project. \$3 billion. To advance that agenda, the Ports Authority propagates bogus job forecasts with stupendous audacity. “Support over 400,000 jobs” says the Web site. We find similar claims in the Ports Authority flackery that shows up in the press.

We have examined the report on which those claims are based, all seven pages of it, and do not find support for the word “support.” The report says those jobs are market-driven and will occur anyway. And the report has three major flaws, such as being based on forecasts requiring the capture of business from established ports. Our analysis is on our Web site.

Can we trust the Assembly? Trust we must. A project of this magnitude must have legislative oversight. We put our faith in the Assembly conferees. But it won’t hurt if you remind them of your confidence. Names and e-mail addresses are on the next page.

Suggested message text:

Senator/Representative

I am/we are In reconciliation of S897, the budget bill, I/we urge you to support the Harrison amendment in the House version (section 30.2), preventing use of State funds for the proposed North Carolina International Terminal.

We should not permit commitment of any kind to this reckless project without legislative oversight. Adoption of the restriction in the House version would prevent further waste of taxpayers' funds until the legislature has reviewed and debated the merits.

Addressees

Note: The conference committee is quite large. We list below only the Assembly members we believe to have a special interest in the matter. We suggest concentrating on the Senators.

Leadership

Senator Marc Basnight	Marc.Basnight@ncleg.net
Senator Martin Nesbitt	Martin.Nesbitt@ncleg.net
Representative Joe Hackney	Joe.Hackney@ncleg.net

Brunswick County

Senator RC Soles	RC.Soles@ncleg.net
Representative Frank Iler	Frank.Iler@ncleg.net

Chairpersons

Senator Charles Albertson	Charlie.Albertson@ncleg.net
Senator Charlie Dannelly	Charlie.Dannelly@ncleg.net
Senator Linda Garrou	Linda.Garrou@ncleg.net
Senator A.B. Swindell	AB.Swindell@ncleg.net
Representative Mickey Michaux	Mickey.Michaux@ncleg.net
Representative Alma Adams	Alma.Adams@ncleg.net
Representative Martha Alexander	Martha.Alexander@ncleg.net
Representative Jim Crawford	Jim.Crawford@ncleg.net
Representative Phillip Haire	Phillip.Haire@ncleg.net
Representative Maggie Jeffus	Maggie.Jeffus@ncleg.net
Representative Joe Tolson	Joe.Tolson@ncleg.net
Representative Douglas Yongue	Douglas.Yongue@ncleg.net

Appropriations Subcommittee on Capital

Representative Bruce Goforth	Bruce.Goforth@ncleg.net
Representative Bill Owens	Bill.Owens@ncleg.net
Representative Larry Wonble	Larry.Wonble@ncleg.net