

The Newsletter of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Congratulations on making it through the dog days of summer! Micha is so happy! As the end of the summer draws nearer, changes are taking place around the Port of Pittsburgh. Our staff was honored to be present at the Change of Command ceremonies for both the US Army Corps of Engineers and the US Coast Guard, MSU Pittsburgh, and we welcome Colonel Adam Czekanski and Commander Eric Velez respectively. We greatly appreciate the efforts of outgoing commanders Colonel Andrew J. 'Coby' Short and Captain Aaron W. Demo and thank them for their service to our region.

Our focus remains on the current federal infrastructure bill, and the \$2.5 billion for new construction on the inland waterways that will include funding for the Montgomery Lock & Dam and two other projects on the inland waterways. The Montgomery Lock & Dam is part of the Upper Ohio Navigation Project that includes one new lock chamber at each facility located on the Ohio River in the Port of Pittsburgh.

This is our sixth edition of the "Newsflow", and the response to it has been overwhelmingly positive, and our readership continues to grow. We remain committed to keep you informed of the available opportunities and good things happening in our region.

Mary Ann Bucci Executive Director, Port of Pittsburgh Commission

What the Federal Infrastructure Package Means for the Inland Waterways

On August 10th the U.S. Senate passed the bipartisan Infrastructure Package by a vote of 69-30. Senator Robert Casey was the only PA senator who voted in support of the bill. This legislation would provide an additional \$2.5 billion for inland waterways construction and major rehabilitation projects, outside of the annual appropriations process. The Port and our industry partners are working hard to ensure that a sufficient funding level for the Upper Ohio Navigation Project new start that includes the Montgomery Locks & Dam is included in the final Work Plan which is scheduled to be released by the US Army Corps of Engineers within 60 days after the bill becomes law.

The bill now heads to the U.S. House of Representatives for consideration and likely adjustments to it before a final vote at a yet to be determined date.

The Senate passed bill also provides \$4 billion for the Corps' Operations and Maintenance account for all business line items within the Civil Works mission. Inland waterways projects and dredging are eligible to compete for funding to be allocated in a Work Plan.

This legislative action is great news for the Port of Pittsburgh! Seventy-percent of the locks and dams throughout the inland waterway system are well past their design life, the

(continued on page 2 . .)



3 RIVERS, 3 QUESTIONS

with *Guy Reschenthaler*

Pennsylvania State Representative



Congressman Guy Reschenthaler represents Pennsylvania's 14th Congressional District including Washington, Fayette, Greene, and portions of Westmoreland Counties. Guy currently serves on both the House Appropriations Committee and the House Committee on Rules.

1. You serve on the House Committee on Appropriations, specifically Energy and Water Development. Can you tell us a bit about that role and your responsibilities, and your priorities for the coming year?

When I was selected to serve on the House Appropriations Committee earlier this year, I requested a seat on the Energy and Water Development Subcommittee because it controls funding for Army Corps' projects on the Ohio, Monongahela, and Allegheny Rivers in southwestern Pennsylvania.

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Infrastructure Package continued

average age being 60 years old. The Port of Pittsburgh is no exception to this, having some of the oldest locks still operating. Constant repairs, both planned and unexpected, are an impediment to healthy commerce, and a catastrophic failure, a distinct possibility, would have a devastating impact on waterborne commerce throughout the Port. The cargo that moved through the Port of Pittsburgh in 2019 accounted for 4% of all the cargo that moved on the inland waterways that year.

This Infrastructure Package, combined with continued strong annual appropriations, are critical to the eventual completion of the Lower Mon Project and the new start underway with the Upper Ohio Navigation Project. Thank you to all of our readers who have reached out to their elected officials on both the importance and continued needs of our critical inland waterways infrastructure.

PortPitt Hosts Marine Highway Discussion

On June 30th the Port hosted our first hybrid (both in-person & virtual) event at Southpointe that focused on the Marine Highway Program. This was a follow-up to an earlier online program this year on funding programs available through the USDOT Maritime Administration. We had 24 participants representing the business community and government agencies with the topic of discussion being finding new freight to move through the Port of Pittsburgh.



A special thank you to MARAD for being part of the program and helping to arrange our virtual guest speakers.

Senator Devlin Robinson Joins PPC Board of Commissioners

The Port of Pittsburgh Commission is pleased to welcome the appointment of Senator Devlin Robinson to its Board of Commissioners. As the appointee by the PA Republican Senate Caucus, Senator Robinson replaces the position on the Port of Pittsburgh Commission Board previously held by Senator Kim Ward (R-39th District), who became Majority Leader of the Senate.



Senator Robinson was elected in November 2020 to serve residents of the 37th State Senatorial District, which includes parts of Allegheny and Washington counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. As a Senate member, he has been appointed to four committees: Appropriations, Local Government, Labor & Industry and Community, Economic & Recreational Development.

Prior to his election to the State Senate, he served in the United States Marine Corps, and is a small business owner of Veteran Medical Technologies, LLC. A native of southwestern Pennsylvania, Senator Robinson resides in Bridgeton.

3 RIVERS, 3 QUESTIONS continued

Guy Reschenthaler

These rivers are vital to our local economy and jobs, including the coal and steel industries. I have been, and will continue to be, a strong advocate for much-needed federal investment in our inland waterways, particularly for replacement of our aging locks and dams, some of which are nearly 100 years old.

2. Transportation and connectivity has been an important part of your accomplishments in your district (specifically, the Laurel Valley Connector and Speers Bridge Replacement on I-70). What other issues are important to you which you feel will support job creation and the region's economy?

Free markets, entrepreneurship, and innovation, not more government, will move this country forward. Rather than placing job-killing mandates on business owners, I support further tax reform, cutting red tape, and other policies that will grow our economy, create jobs, and get more Americans back to work.

Our region is blessed with natural resources that drive energy production and manufacturing, while our riverways provide the perfect transportation mode to move those products. It is deeply troubling that the Biden Administration and House Democrats want to end domestic oil, gas, and coal production and place onerous regulations on our industrial sector. Their far-left proposals will harm blue-collar workers and threaten national security by making us reliant on foreign nations for our energy needs, not to mention increase prices for American families.

Thanks to American innovation, the United States currently leads the world in CO2 emission reduction. The federal government should spur that same ingenuity by supporting research and development into carbon capture technologies, development of a domestic critical mineral supply chain, and other new technologies that will drive our country forward.

3. The Port of Pittsburgh Commission continues to advocate for our river stakeholders, specifically grant funding, infrastructure. Where are some areas that the PPC can offer support the efforts of your office and multimodal transportation in our region?

The Port of Pittsburgh Commission is a tremendous partner in providing real-world examples highlighting the importance of investment in our nation's waterways. When I share with my congressional colleagues the economic impact the port has not just for Pennsylvania, but for the region and nation as a whole, they are more likely to support funding and projects that benefit and modernize our navigable waterways and create jobs in our community.



Changes of Command: USACE, Pittsburgh District & USCG, MSU Pittsburgh



Two new commanders have taken charge of their respective posts at the US Coast Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh, and the US Army Corps Pittsburgh District. And unfortunately that means saying goodbye to two previous commanders as well.

The Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh held a change-of-command ceremony Thursday, June 24th at the Pittsburgh Botanical Garden in Pittsburgh, where Capt. Aaron Demo transferred command of MSU Pittsburgh to Cmdr. Eric Velez. As the commanding officer of MSU Pittsburgh, Velez will assume the responsibilities of captain of the port, for an area covering Western Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and Northern West Virginia. Cmdr. Velez previously served as the chief of inspections division at Coast Guard Sector Honolulu.



Demo originally took command of MSU Pittsburgh in 2018 and will report to the Coast Guard Traveling Inspectors Office in Washington, D.C.





Col. Adam J. Czekanski became the 56th commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pittsburgh District through at the change of command ceremony held at the Senator John Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, July 29. Colonel Czekanski oversees the district's 328 miles of navigable waterways, locks and dams, reservoirs, and more than 80 local-flood damage-reduction projects across five states: Maryland, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Col. Czekanski assumed command from Col. Andrew J. "Coby" Short, who served as commander since July 2018.



The Port of Pittsburgh Commission would like to thank Captain Demo and Colonel Short for their service and contributions to our region, and look forward working with Commander Velez and Colonel Czekanski and continuing our strong relationship with both of their agencies.



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Port of Pittsburgh
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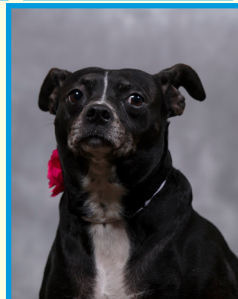
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GOOD THINGS FLOW FROM HERE

