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NEWS RELEASE

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Whitman's Statement on Retaining Port Jobs

Governor Christie Whitman today reiterated her support for a plan to keep approximately 170,000 jobs at the Ports of Newark and Elizabeth. The Governor called upon the administration of Governor Pataki of New York and the Port Authority to agree with the plan to keep major shipping lines, and to ensure the continued viability of the region's ports in the worldwide market. Whitman also urged SeaLand and Maersk complete their review process and announce their decisions as soon as possible.

"We have done all we can in New Jersey to insure that these jobs stay here. Along with Senate President Donald DiFrancesco, we have provided a package of financing which we believe is competitive enough to keep SeaLand and Maersk at the Port," Whitman said.

The Governor went on to state that disagreements with New York Governor Pataki over the structure and future of the Port Authority should not stand in the way of finalizing the lease agreement.

"A potential philosophical difference with Governor Pataki over the role of the Port Authority in our region's infrastructure should not stand in the way of making sure that 170,000 hard working residents in both New York and New Jersey keep their jobs," she said.

The Governor has continued to reiterate during the discussions of the last several weeks that she's willing to consider a full and open analysis of all matters concerning the investments and structure of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

"My concerns continue to be for the workers affected by SeaLand and Maersk and the long term impact any restructuring would have on New Jersey residents as well as our ability to continue relying on the Port Authority for regional infrastructure development," she said.

"I look forward to hearing Governor Pataki's decision, and an announcement from SeaLand and Maersk, which I hope will be to remain in the region," she said.