



News From
DAVE WELDON

Florida's 15th District -- *Serving Brevard, Indian River, Osceola, and Polk Counties*

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**WELDON INTRODUCES SHORT SEA SHIPPING TAX
EXEMPTION ACT OF 2005**

(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Representative Dave Weldon, M.D. recently introduced H.R. 3319, the Short Sea Shipping Tax Exemption Act of 2005. Under current law, whenever a cargo ship services a port along America's coastline it is subject to the Harbor Maintenance Tax. This additional tax often hampers cargo vessels and creates unfair competition between shipping, rail and highway cargo carriers.

“With our rail lines and highways at full capacity and a growing economy and population, America must find new ways to help cargo be transported. The end result being the creation of a blue water highway that has robust cargo traffic in and out of America's ports.

“Currently vessels are subject to the Harbor Maintenance Tax each and every time when servicing a port. This tax precludes many vessels from going to many American ports in a sequential fashion. This legislation would eliminate that tax and thus remove a barrier to Short Sea Shipping. Without this tax in place a cargo vessel could travel from Port Canaveral in Florida, to Baltimore and then onto New York without having to pay the tax. The tax would remain for the larger, ocean-going cargo ships.

“For Short Sea Shipping/Blue Water Highway to become a reality, it will take more than the removal of the Harbor Maintenance Tax for the unique vessels needed for Short Sea Shipping, but this a good first step,” Weldon said from the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.

“Canaveral Port Authority would like to thank Congressman Weldon for introducing this bill. We view this as a positive step for short sea shipping, Port Canaveral, and many other ports that will benefit from short sea trade,” J. Stanley Payne, CEO of Canaveral Port Authority.

Increased short sea shipping would ease road congestion and reduce air pollution along our highways. Additionally, the projected numbers of containers imported into America will soon out number the number of trains and trucks available to ship them.

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