

**ADMINISTRATOR BETTY SUTTON
REMARKS FOR
SEAWAY SYSTEM 2014 OPENING CEREMONY
ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO
MARCH 28, 2014**

- Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I want to welcome all of our honored guests and Seaway System stakeholders. Thank you for joining us to celebrate the opening of the 56th navigation season.
- I am pleased to be here with this fine group of speakers here today and want to recognize my counterpart at the Canadian Seaway, President Terence Bowles, Mr. Greg Wight, CEO of Algoma Central Corporation who has brought the newly constructed magnificent *Algoma Equinox* here today for the historic first transit, and Mr. Brian Benko, representing Arcelor Mittal Dofasco.
- As we look ahead to the 2014 shipping season, we have reason to be optimistic that it will be a good one for our binational waterway.
- The new CEE Way liner service in Cleveland offers great potential and will be a tremendous boost for the entire Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Seaway System.
- Another good piece of news is that the U.S. Congress has addressed Great Lakes dredging needs in legislation that is expected to be signed into law very soon.
- For the first time ever, the Great Lakes will be treated as a ‘system’ for funding purposes. This will allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide more money for dredging for the U.S. Great Lakes ports, big and small.

- It is a much more equitable allocation of dredging money for our Great Lakes ports, helping to assure we aren't shortchanged in the future.
- In addition, both the U.S. and Canadian Seaway Corporations are continuing with our programs to rehabilitate and modernize our lock and channel infrastructure.
- On the U.S. side, we are at the mid-point of the federally funded multiyear Asset Renewal Program.
- In the first five years of ARP funding, the SLSDC spent \$80 million on 42 separate projects that addressed various needs for the U.S. Seaway locks, maintenance dredging, operational systems, and Corporation equipment.
- An additional \$91 million is being proposed for the five year period from 2015 to 2019.
- The major projects we anticipate funding in FY15 include, the installation of a new hands-free vessel vacuum mooring system to ensure seamlessness and continuity in the system, as well as continued upgrades to the mitre gate machinery and structural rehabilitation of the mitre gates at our locks, and the start of a four-year, \$24.8 million project to replace the SLSDC's tugboats *Robinson Bay* and *Performance*.
- In addition to providing jobs, the improvements are already making a difference in the safety and efficiency of the system.

- The ARP program is vital to ensuring system availability and the flow of goods via the St. Lawrence Seaway.
- Likewise, the Canadian Seaway has spent hundreds of millions of dollars, with more to come, on infrastructure and new technologies.
- Together, when both programs are finished, we will have collectively spent over ¾ of a billion dollars on renewing and modernizing our infrastructure – a sizable investment in any context.
- And also a signal by the U.S. and Canadian governments of a long-term public commitment to Great Lakes Seaway shipping.
- In fact, President Obama recently outlined his vision for investing in America’s infrastructure with a \$302 billion, four year transportation reauthorization proposal, making it a priority to repair and improve America’s ports.
- His plan includes a new, \$10 billion multimodal freight grant program for rail, highway and port projects to strengthen America’s exports and trade.
- Funds are going to be made available to specifically support regional transportation planning, including freight and port planning.
- At the same time, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced that \$600 million will be made available to fund

transportation projects around the country under the latest round of grants being made available by the Department.

- This funding presents an opportunity for governors, mayors, and other local leaders to partner with the federal government to help improve our nation's ports.
- I am encouraging our stakeholders in the Great Lakes to take advantage of these opportunities to help make the critical infrastructure investments needed to keep Great Lakes shipping a growing and vital component of the global transportation network.
- All of this gives me reason to be encouraged and optimistic!
- The new ships, technology innovations, infrastructure investments and environmental advantages of shipping ensure that we are poised for a bright future.
- With reference to the Great Lakes area, the May 2013 Bank of Montreal Special Report noted: "...the region accounts for 28 percent of combined U.S. and Canadian economic activity. By comparison, the region's output ranks ahead of Germany, France, Brazil, and the United Kingdom, and it would rank as the **fourth largest economy in the world if it were a country**, behind only the U.S., China, and Japan. Quite simply, the economic importance of the region can't be overstated."
- I know we'll all be working closely to keep our maritime industry strong and always moving forward.
- With all of you, I look forward to a safe and successful navigation season.