



OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

**Testimony on the 2017-2026 Proposed Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Capital Plan**

**Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**

**February 15, 2017**

My name is Eric L. Adams, and I am the Brooklyn borough president, representing 2.6 million residents who call this borough home. Today, I submit to you my testimony on the proposed 2017-2026 Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) capital plan.

Over the last decade, Brooklyn has experienced tremendous development and population growth. By the next decennial census, Brooklyn will have more than 2.7 million residents, making it the third largest city in the United States. What distinguishes Brooklyn's rise in development and population growth is its access to the waterfront and its early development as a major port destination that helped spur manufacturing and export trade. Some of these facilities, such as the Red Hook Container Terminal and the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal, still exist along the Brooklyn waterfront today.

When I was elected Brooklyn's borough president, I made the expansion of our maritime industry one of my top priorities, by building off of our existing manufacturing businesses to fuel its growth. Its vitality is critical to the overall economic health and competitiveness of our region.

Unfortunately, the level of investment for Brooklyn in the proposed 2017-2026 PANYNJ capital plan is insufficient to see this vision become reality. The only

capital funding that exists in the current plan is a paltry investment of \$71.6 million for the Brooklyn Marine Terminals (e.g. Red Hook Container Terminal). This investment is important to sustain its current use, but insufficient to grow the waterfront industry into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. The Port Authority Board of Commissioners must invest more in Brooklyn in order to ensure that the eastern side of New York Harbor is a viable port facility to accommodate the economy of the future.

The PANYNJ's divestment from Brooklyn's facilities and the relocation of port operations to Elizabeth and Newark, New Jersey, put Brooklyn at an economic disadvantage as cargo volumes have grown in the region by 35 percent.

The port industry generates 165,350 direct jobs in the region, more than \$18.3 billion in personal income, and \$28.9 billion in business income. Brooklyn, however, has been denied an equitable share of that economic bounty because of the lack of efficient upgrades to the borough's port facilities.

Port commerce has grown, direct and indirect employment has increased, and business and tax revenues have arisen substantially, but Brooklyn has lost maritime jobs as a result of the decline in port commerce as well as the intended economic benefits to its local business community.

An example of this inequitable investment strategy is the proposed capital allocation of \$1 billion to extend the PATH train to Newark Airport, on top of an additional \$380 million for the existing Newark Airport AirTrain system, which only carries an average of 30,000 passengers a day.

If the PANYNJ is willing to invest more than \$1 billion dollars in economic development for New Jersey, Brooklyn should receive a greater share in investment of PANYNJ dollars.

On February 22, 2017, we will be hosting our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Waterfront Summit that focuses on the maritime industry the growth of jobs in along the waterfront to help drive the growing economy there. It is my sincere hope that PANYNJ will come to the summit prepared to advance a job-creating vision for our borough.

Brooklyn is an important engine of growth for New York City and the surrounding region. I hope Brooklynites can count on the PANYNJ to develop a revised capital allocation strategy that adequately funds the growth of Brooklyn maritime industry. Furthermore, I would hope to schedule a meeting to discuss in greater detail the opportunities that are present to help grow our Brooklyn port industrial base.

Thank you.

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