



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor Rick Perry signs Port of Corpus Christi security legislation authored by Sen. Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa and state Representatives Abel Herrero and Solomon Ortiz, Jr.

(CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas) – The Port of Corpus Christi is pleased to announce Governor Rick Perry has signed SB 836 relating to enhanced waterborne security measures at The Port of Corpus Christi. Senator Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa authored the bill in the senate and state Representatives Abel Herrero and Solomon Ortiz, Jr. sponsored the bill in the house.

"The closure of the Naval Station at Ingleside requires a collaborative and proactive response from the Coastal Bend region, specifically Nueces County and the Port of Corpus Christi Authority. The passage of these laws provides clear authority to the Port so that it may implement an economic development plan and secure the waterways under the Port's control," Hinojosa said.

This legislation mirrors the recent Sabine-Neches bill that was passed last legislative session (H.B. 3634) and enacted in 2007, which granted the authority to provide necessary security on the waterways thereof. The POCCA Ship Channel and Inner Harbor, and adjoining waterways (Gulf Intracoastal Waterway) serve to provide waterborne access to POCCA Strategic Military Deployment Docks, Petrochemical transfer facilities, bulk material and other maritime facilities critical to Homeland Security and maritime commerce.



“Both state and federal officials recognize the important role the port plays in economic development, trade, and commerce. In order to fully protect our community and state, it is critical that The Port of Corpus Christi have the necessary authority and jurisdiction to ensure advanced security for our waterways,” said state Representative Abel Herrero.

The Port of Corpus Christi Authority (POCCA) is establishing, for the first time, a Port Security Marine Enforcement Division. The objective is to present a sense of law enforcement omnipresence as a deterrent to terrorist and/or criminal threats to POCCA critical infrastructure

"The Port of Corpus Christi is one of the busiest seaports in the nation and the port police play a vital role in providing security for the safe passage of commerce and personnel and I'm proud to have passed legislation helping the port police complete their mission," said state Rep. Ortiz, Jr.

Texas Parks & Wildlife and U.S. Coast Guard both have an intermittent, transitory presence on POCCA waterways. The primary mission and resources of both agencies do not currently allow for a continuous patrol presence on POCCA waterways. The Port will be acquiring all-weather, multi-purpose patrol boats along with officers to staff full-time marine units to provide a continuous patrol presence of port waterways.

“A clear message has been sent to the Port of Corpus Christi by the members of our legislative delegation and Governor Perry that we need to enhance our security presence in preparation of receiving Naval Station Ingleside,” said Kenneth Berry, Chairman of the Port’s Security Committee.

For more information please visit: www.portofcorpuschristi.com