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Texas Governor Rick Perry on hand to inaugurate new Southside Military Rail Facility

Military operations to be enhanced by infrastructure improvements

(Corpus Christi, TX) --- Texas Governor Rick Perry was on hand today for the driving of the final rail spikes at the Port of Corpus Christi's new Southside Military Rail Facility. In February 2005, Governor Perry announced a \$5.2 million grant to the Port of Corpus Christi for the purpose of significantly enhancing the rail capacity and military outloading capability of the port. This two-phase project will eventually double the port's capacity to handle military unit-trains of equipment from Fort Hood, Fort Bliss, and other bases in Texas and the Midwest. During peacetime, this inter-modal rail facility will serve an equally valuable economic role in supporting the trans-loading of commercial, industrial, and agriculture products moving through South Texas.

"This is a great day for the State of Texas, Port of Corpus Christi and the City of Corpus Christi," said Ruben Bonilla, Chairman of the Port of Corpus Christi. "The enhancement of our rail capacity offers the Port of Corpus Christi a competitive edge in comparison to other ports along the Gulf Coast," Bonilla added.

Also attending were, Brigadier General Maynard Sanders, Deputy Commanding General of the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, Loyd



Neal, a recently reappointed member of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission, Dee Varshney, Director of the Central Region of the U.S. Maritime Administration, and Craig Clark, District Engineer for the Texas Department of Transportation.

The Department of Defense and the Maritime Administration designated Corpus Christi as the Strategic Military Deployment Seaport in December 1997. Of the nation's 19 strategic seaports, Corpus Christi and the Port of Beaumont, Texas have been the two busiest commercial ports in the nation handling military equipment. Approximately forty percent of all military equipment deploying through U.S. seaports has passed through the Texas Gulf Coast. This workload may even grow in the future as overseas deployments continue and additional brigade size units are reassigned from bases in Germany and Korea to stateside locations in Texas and other military installations in the U.S. Midwest.

The State of Texas and the Port of Corpus Christi continue to support the Department of Defense as it seeks to transform our nation's military forces to meet the threats of the future. Texas' strategic seaports will continue to play a major role in this process as tanks, trucks, helicopters and other military vehicles are deployed worldwide to respond to national defense priorities.

"This new rail capability at the Port of Corpus Christi is critical to meeting the military's growing deployment requirements through the Texas Gulf Coast," said Brigadier General Sanders, Deputy Commanding General of the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.