

From:

**Kristin Decas**

**New Bedford Port Director**

CEO & Executive Director of the New Bedford Harbor Development

Commission

**1) Is there the potential for a Marine Highway Program in the United States?**

I contend there is a Marine Highway Program in the United States. However, it is underutilized and offers great potential to help meet the nation's transportation demands as a key element of the surface transportation network.

**2) What are some of the barriers to making MH a reality on a larger scale?**

Several factors that merit consideration; the concept of change poses challenges -- studies suggest a 30% cost savings is the threshold needed for a business to change its mode of transportation. Unlocking the logistical challenges is critical to advancing the AMH - Getting industry, shippers, ports all aligned is key. Incentives are going to be a big piece to the success of mobilizing an integrated intermodal AMH - surface transportation network.

**3) Is MH a part of a National Transportation System?**

Most definitely and in fact, an essential component of the nation's transportation system. With the development of the AMH program at the federal level, the maritime sees new opportunity in terms of playing a significant role in public policy development on transportation issues.

Rail, truck, air, and sea are all vital modes in the nation's intermodal transportation network and through strategic planning can meet the nation's transportation needs both efficiently and cost effectively. New Bedford looks forward to emerging as a key hub in the AMH and helping to prosper that network.

**Kristin's Bio:**

Starting January of 2007, Kristin Decas has served as the CEO and Executive Director of the New Bedford Harbor Development Commission (HDC), the governing entity for the Port and the municipal organization responsible for managing the Port of New Bedford and its waterfront facilities and properties. In this capacity Ms. Decas is responsible for the operations and policies of the HDC and for the strategic economic development of the Port. Ms. Decas as Executive Director manages all port real estate owned by the City including 21 commercial properties, 5 municipal fish piers, 1,600 linear feet of fish

product unloading dock, the Whales tooth parking lot and its ferry shuttle service, and a 198 slip marina. She is responsible for the assignment of the Harbor's 500 moorings and the enforcement of rules regarding the use of piers, wharves, parking areas, and navigational waterways. Ms. Decas oversees the Port's harbor master functions. She manages capital development projects and the HDC budget. She oversees the daily operations of the HDC and its personnel.

Before coming onboard with New Bedford, Kristin spent 6 years working for the Governor's Seaport Council, an entity that makes port development investments for the Commonwealth out of a 300 million dollar bond bill as well as articulates maritime policy for the Governor. In this role Ms. Decas accumulated institutional know-how to get things done, secure funding, support port industries, and capitalize on new economic opportunities. She advanced critical maritime agendas for Massachusetts coastal communities to support commercial fishing, cargo, cruise, ferry, excursion, and recreational operations. Ms. Decas advocated economic development, including putting municipal ports on the map as hubs in the emerging short sea network and Historic Ports Cruise Initiative. She spearheaded port infrastructure and water-sheet management projects in over 35 communities (up to 50 projects at a time). She managed funding for and participated in several efforts in the New Bedford/Fairhaven Harbor related to fendering, berthing, dredging, harbor planning, sunken vessel removal, State Pier projects, Portsfields and the State Enhanced Remedy program. Ms. Decas also managed the state's port security grant program for the next tier ports.

Prior to her tenure with the Seaport Council Kristin spearheaded the Commonwealth's Alternative Fuel Vehicle program working on number of strategic economic and environmental transportation initiatives.

Ms. Decas has a degree in Economics from the University of Vermont where she graduated Cum Laude, Deans List, and was placed in the Economics Honors Program. She acquired a Masters in Environmental Policy and Law from the University of Denver.

### **Service on Port Committees**

City of New Bedford Foreign Trade Zone Commission, Commission Member, 2007 to Present

North Atlantic Ports Association, Short Sea Committee, Chair, 2008 to Present

I-95 Corridor Coalition, Marine Highway Coalition, Co-Chair, 2008 to Present

Coastal Coalition, Member, 2008 to Present

Transportation Research Board, Serve on Short Sea Shipping Study Panel, 2008 to Present

Navigation and Environment Committee, American Association of Port Authorities, 2009 to Present

Economic Development Committee, American Association of Port Authorities, 2009 to Present

Marine Highway Collaborative, US Maritime Administration, Member, 2009 to Present

**Awards:**

Commonwealth's Outstanding Performance Award, 2001

Proclamation from the State Legislature for excellent performance with the Commonwealth, 2007