



**METROPOLITAN HALIFAX
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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Since 1750.*

For Immediate Release

Halifax Second Now but Port Positioned for Long-term Success

Metro Halifax, Nova Scotia -- May 7, 1999 -- Maersk/Sea-Land announced today that they have selected their long-time partner, New York-New Jersey, as the principle port for their current business volume. In second place is the Port of Halifax, which Maersk/Sea-Land has targeted for the future.

In a letter to Finance Minister Don Downe, Maersk/Sea-Land congratulated the Nova Scotia team for a "comprehensive and competitive proposal" and stated their "intention that Halifax will continue to be a port of call and factors large into Maersk and Sea-Land's future plans for growth."

"While today's announcement was not the one hoped for," says Valerie Payn, General Manager of the Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce, "we see it as only a temporary setback. New York cannot and probably never will be able to take a fully-laden post-Panamax vessel," Payn adds. "When crossing the Atlantic, these vessels will have to stop in Halifax and offload a significant portion of their cargo."

The Chamber agrees with all port stakeholders that there will be continued growth in container traffic on the eastern seaboard and we have the competitive advantage to win a major part of this business. Halifax has demonstrated through this bid that it is the right choice for major future growth.

Today's news means the community must take immediate steps to leverage our momentum and work with all port customers to increase their traffic through the port. "We are now well-positioned to aggressively pursue the other carriers who could benefit from post-Panamax service in Halifax," says Payn. "As a result of the efforts of our community, other post-Panamax carriers now have us on their radar screens."

The Chamber congratulates the local port community for the increased international profile achieved by the Port of Halifax through our bid for Maersk/Sea-Land's east coast superport.

The Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce is a voluntary, not-for-profit organization that represents business interests and provides vital leadership that benefits Metro Halifax and the Atlantic region. The 1,650 corporate members of the Chamber employ more than 50,000 people, representing over one quarter of Metro Halifax's labour force of 194,000. As the voice of business, the Chamber works on behalf of small businesses and large corporations alike. Organizations with 25 or fewer employees represent 78 per cent of Chamber membership.

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