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CONTACT: Amy Goldsmith, Chair, Coalition for Healthy Ports (CHPs) and State Director, NJ Environmental Federation (NJEF) agoldsmith@cleanwater.org cell 732-895-2502

At US Coast Guard hearing on Bayonne Bridge in Newark today...

AREA RESIDENTS CITE EPA DOCUMENT CALLING FOR FULL ENVIRO IMPACT REVIEW & DEMAND MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT PROJECT PROTECTS PUBLIC HEALTH

COAST GUARD FAILED TO DEAL WITH INCREASED RISK OF ASTHMA, LUNG CANCER & HEART DISEASE

Call on Port Authority to Fix Broken Port Trucking Industry to Meet Challenge of Increased Commerce When Bridge Project Is Completed

Citing risks of increased levels of asthma, lung cancer and cardiovascular disease from the increased truck traffic through neighborhoods surrounding the Port of Newark, area residents, health professionals and other experts testified at a US Coast Guard hearing today in Newark on the inadequacy of its Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) of the proposal to raise the Bayonne Bridge's roadway by sixty-three feet to make room for the new generation of supersized Panamax ships.

Testimony focused on a list of deficiencies (see below) and emphasized the following points:

- 1) The DEA failed to recognize the scientific evidence now available identifying the fine particulate matter in diesel exhaust from trucks, trains and ships as the cause of increased levels of asthma, lung cancer and cardiovascular disease.
- 2) Recently released documents reveal that the US EPA shares residents' view of the need for a full Environmental Impact Review of the project.
- 3) The Port Authority should take measures proposed by the Coalition for Healthy Ports (see below) to ensure that a project that all agree has the potential to provide new and decent jobs for the community actually does so, and not at the price of residents' health or on the backs of Port truck drivers.
- 4) The Port's trucking industry is broken—its drivers often misclassified, its trucks not up to standards—and must be fixed.
- 5) The goal should be a net reduction in Port pollution as the Port grows.

"The Coalition for Healthy Ports (CHP) welcomes the increase in jobs and economic growth promised by the project's proponents but insists that the costs of the necessary health and environmental protections should not be borne by area residents—who would otherwise suffer damaged health and higher health care bills—but by the shippers and others who will profit from the development," **said Amy Goldsmith, Chair of the Coalition for Healthy Ports and State Director of the NJ Environmental Federation (NJEF).**

"Port adjacent communities like ours suffer from a high level of diesel pollution from the many old model trucks that service the Port. There must be a plan to mitigate air pollution before projects like this begin. We welcome growth and the jobs it will generate, but not at the expense of our health," **said Ana Baptista representing Newark's Ironbound Community Corporation and NJ Environmental Justice Alliance**

"EPA believes that a proper analysis of changes in cargo associated with the project would likely show a degree of change that could reasonably be expected to result in environmental impacts, particularly impacts related to air quality.' As the Chair of the Newark Environmental Commission I along with the residents of Newark have significant concerns that these impacts will disproportionately impact our communities surrounding the Port. In addition, the Newark community demand a community benefits agreement that will address the health, economic and social impacts from this project," **said Kim Gaddy, Newark resident and Chair of the Newark Environmental Commission.**

"The EPA has made it clear that the Port Authority's economic analysis which suggest that raising the bridge won't worsen air quality is beyond belief. The Coalition for Healthy Ports has known all along that when it comes to Bayonne Bridge, the Port Authority's analysis is voodoo economics – with the port adjacent communities getting stuck hardest. This project, and the health of the community, demands a full Environmental Impact Statement. The Coalition expects that the Coast Guard will do the right thing and call for it immediately," **said the Rev. Fletcher Harper, Executive Director, GreenFaith.**

"The Port Authority must address the existing diesel pollution crisis and misclassification scheme in the port trucking fleet before it is permitted to expand and increase the amount of pollution that gets heaped on already overburdened communities. The Teamsters stand with the 7000 port drivers who keep our economy moving. These hardworking men and women deserve fair wages for a fair days' work and the right to a healthy and safe workplace," **said Fred Potter, Port Division Director, International Brotherhood of Teamsters.**