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MAYOR VILLARAIGOSA ANNOUNCES $10 MILLION GRANT TO BOOST PORT SECURITY

Proposition 1B funds will enhance security for law enforcement, vehicles and cruise passengers at the Port of Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES – Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa announced today that the Port of Los Angeles will receive more than $10 million in state homeland security grants to beef up security at the nation's busiest port.

"Our ports are the lifeblood of our prosperity, and this makes them an obvious target for those who would harm us in an age of terrorism," Mayor Villaraigosa said. "Protecting this great asset - the largest ports complex in the nation - is a crucial task.

"This injection of $10 million in Proposition 1B funds will be used to tighten vehicle inspection operations, expand training for our port police officers, buy improved equipment and implement a resource tracking system to aid first responders in the event of an emergency."

The grants will enable the LA Port Police and other law enforcement agencies to enhance communications, improve emergency response systems, and boost vehicle inspections through new technology, expanded facilities and additional training.

The grant money represents the first homeland security funding available from California's Proposition 1B, passed in November 2006 to improve air quality, goods movement, and the safety and security of the state's transportation system.

"Our Governor and State Legislature should be commended for moving this security funding process forward in such an expedient manner," said Port of Los Angeles Executive Director Geraldine Knatz. "These are funds we can use to bolster our facilities, training and field operations for the benefit of both San Pedro Bay ports, the agencies that provide our multi-layered security network, and the communities that surround our port complex."

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The Proposition 1B funding will support a wide range of projects, including a vehicle inspection facility and an X-ray imaging system to examine commercial vehicles bound for the World Cruise Center. Law enforcement agencies will also benefit from new boat-mooring docks and piers, a mobile air-compressor system for divers, training classes in maritime security, and a state-of-the-art system for electronically tracking personnel as they operate at the Port and in surrounding communities.

The more than $10 million in security funds will be divided among these programs and initiatives in the following manner:

- Commercial vehicle inspection area with X-ray imaging system -- $3.864 million

- Electronic “Blue Force” tracking system that will enable command and dispatch centers to see where police cars, boats and other equipment are located at all times -- $3.375 million

- Temporary mooring and dock facilities for multi-agency law-enforcement vessels, to facilitate joint agency operations -- $2.377 million

- Maritime training for law enforcement -- $450,000

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