

[AGENCY / ORGANIZATION LETTERHEAD]

October 27, 2026

Elizabeth Walters, Chair
Panama City Port Authority
One Seaport Drive
Panama City, Florida 32401

RE: Support for Amendment to the Panama City Port Authority Special Act Charter

Dear Chair Walters:

On behalf of [AGENCY / ORGANIZATION NAME], I am writing to express our support for legislation amending the Panama City Port Authority's special act charter to delete the existing geographic restriction on the Authority's ability to lease, own, or acquire real estate. The current charter provides that the Authority may not lease, own, or acquire real estate except in Bay County or within 10 miles of the City of Panama City, whichever is greater.

The Panama City Port Authority's charter otherwise authorizes the Authority to acquire, construct, maintain, equip, operate, and manage port terminal facilities, associated marine structures and facilities, industrial parks, manufacturing plants, and other improvements appropriate to its purposes. Removing the geographic limitation would modernize the charter and provide the Authority greater flexibility to pursue property interests and strategic investments that support port operations, logistics, transportation, industrial development, and related economic development opportunities.

[AGENCY / ORGANIZATION NAME] believes this change can strengthen regional economic development by allowing the Port to respond more effectively to opportunities involving freight mobility, cargo staging, off-site truck parking, warehousing and distribution, rail and highway connectivity, industrial recruitment, supply-chain infrastructure, and other port-related uses that may be most practical outside the existing geographic boundary. Such flexibility can help support business expansion, attract private capital investment, improve the movement of goods, create and retain jobs, and enhance the competitiveness of Port Panama City and the broader Northwest Florida economy.

This action is also directly consistent with the Port's adopted 2024 Strategic Master Plan. Objective 1.7, Policy 1.7.3 specifically directs the Port to explore off-port opportunities within the region and recognizes that the Port's existing enabling legislation limits its ability to own, acquire, or lease property beyond the current geographic boundary. Policy 1.7.3 further identifies the legislative action necessary to pursue a broader regional investment approach for the greater Panhandle area and expressly directs the Port to pursue enactment of a Local Bill to amend its enabling legislation. Accordingly, deletion or modification of the existing geographic restriction would implement an identified policy action in the 2024 Strategic Master Plan and provide the legal flexibility contemplated by that plan to evaluate strategic off-port investments that advance regional freight, logistics, industrial, and economic-development objectives.

Importantly, deletion of the geographic restriction would provide enabling authority rather than mandate any particular acquisition or project. Individual transactions would remain subject to the Authority's applicable governance, budgeting, contracting, financing, land-use, permitting, and other legal requirements. This amendment would therefore provide the Port with an additional economic-development tool while preserving the review and approval processes applicable to future projects.

For these reasons, [AGENCY / ORGANIZATION NAME] supports deletion of the charter language limiting the Panama City Port Authority's ability to lease, own, or acquire real estate to Bay County or within 10 miles of the City of Panama City. The proposed amendment is consistent with and advances Objective 1.7, Policy 1.7.3 of the Port's 2024 Strategic Master Plan by enabling the broader regional investment approach contemplated by the plan. We respectfully request favorable consideration of the proposed Local Bill and believe it will position the Port to better serve regional commerce, economic development, and long-term transportation and logistics needs.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued support of economic development and maritime commerce in Northwest Florida.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

[TITLE]

[AGENCY / ORGANIZATION NAME]

[PHONE]

[EMAIL]