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Throughout history great cities and seaports have developed and prospered together. One only need look at a map of our California coastline to see San Francisco, Los Angeles, Long Beach and San Diego, all cities with international reputations as important economic, cultural and trade centers.

It is no accident that citizens of California have chosen to settle around these important gateways of opportunity.

Although it will never be the size of the above mentioned Ports, Ventura County has its own economic anchor in the Port of Hueneme. Born out of necessity to handle agricultural products for local farmers the port has developed into one of our states primary economic resources and an important asset in our military supply chain.

A key date in planning for the future of our Port occurred Nov. 6. The Oxnard Harbor District in conjunction with Cal State University Channel Islands, Naval Base Ventura County and the Oxnard Economic Development Corporation, hosted an economic roundtable to discuss the Port's economic role today and in the future.

Dozens of people involved in the county's economic future met on the campus of CSUCI to talk about the role of the Port of Hueneme can play in keeping the economy of our region strong.

California's west coast proximity to Asia and its population has created a market place for Asian goods. However, this demand for goods made overseas has come with a price. From 2000 to 2004, our state's industrial sector has lost thousands of jobs to overseas manufacturing.

On the other hand, Ports are providing the opportunity for the creation of good-paying jobs. Millions of Americans are entering the middle class and beyond because of jobs at the nation's Ports.

These are jobs that traditionally provide higher wages and benefits than other blue collar industries. The Port of Hueneme alone is a billion dollar community asset. The businesses utilizing Port resources generate more than 4,500 jobs and \$650 million

annually for our local economy. Recently the Board of Harbor Commissioners approved its 31st consecutive budget that calls for no taxpayer assistance.

Today international trade and the logistics industry associated with it offer the opportunity to replace jobs lost to overseas manufacturing and more. Current statistics indicate that more than 730,000 Californians are employed in the Goods Movement industry. Recent economic forecasts indicate that an additional 1.3 million new jobs can be created in California to accommodate the state's growing international trade logistics, infrastructure and transportation needs.

Goods movement will continue to play a critical role in the economic vitality of Southern California. As Port growth develops, integration of goals and leadership will be necessary to balance transportation, land use and environmental issues.

Planning now for transportation-related needs is an important strategy for maintaining our Port's economic contribution to our county and the region. A unified effort between the Port of Hueneme and Naval Base Ventura County to improve facilities and infrastructure strengthens our ability to assist and facilitate military deployments in time of national emergency while improving our traditional movement.

Extraordinary opportunities and challenges lay ahead. Partnerships with world class customers such as NYKCool, Del Monte Fresh, Yara of North America, Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics, the BMW Group and others will guarantee, that billions of dollars of goods will continue to pass through our Port. These partnerships provide business opportunities and a good quality of life for the people these businesses employ.

As one of California's primary economic assets, the Port of Hueneme will continue to offer working opportunities for businesses that utilize Port assets and the citizens they employ and in the midst of a difficult economic cycle, that important.