AUTORIDAD DE LOS PUERTOS

**Puerto Rico Ports Authority welcomes**

**JAXPORT leadership to San Juan**

*JAXPORT business development trip follows MOU that*

*affirms longstanding partnership between the two ports*

**San Juan, June 16th, 2021 –** The Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Ports Authority (PRPA), Joel A. Pizá Batiz, welcomed Jacksonville Port Authority (JAXPORT) leadership to San Juan this week during JAXPORT’s four-day business development trip to the island.

“We are extremely pleased to welcome Chief Executive Officer Eric Green, Chief Operating Officer Fred Wong, and Director of Cruise and Cargo Development Alberto Cabrera, who responded to our invitation to visit our maritime cargo and cruise ship facilities and learn more about our operations. With this pleasant visit, we continue to further strengthen our relationship with JAXPORT,” Pizá Batiz commented.

On Monday, the group toured PRPA facilities, including cargo operations in Puerto Nuevo, cruise ship piers 4 and Panamericano I & II, piers 15 and 16 in San Juan Bay, and the port’s headquarters in Isla Grande.

On Tuesday afternoon, they participated in a meeting of the PRPA Board of Directors, as a follow-up to the JAXPORT Board meeting held last April in Jacksonville, in which Pizá Batiz and Green signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to affirm the vital relationship between the two seaports.

During Tuesday’s board meeting, the PRPA Board of Directors presented a plaque to the JAXPORT leadership, commemorating their follow-up visit to San Juan.

“The history and success of JAXPORT can be traced directly to our trading relationship with Puerto Rico – and we are pleased to have signed an MOU this year with the PRPA to formally recognize this partnership,” Green said. “We are committed to working together to continue to build on this success and the positive impact it has on jobs and businesses in our communities.”

Maritime trade between Jacksonville and Puerto Rico was established during the 1950s. Jacksonville is the number one port in the United States for trade with the island, handling almost 90% of all maritime cargo moving between Puerto Rico and the U.S. mainland.

Under the MOU, PRPA and JAXPORT are collaborating in key areas including: business development and marketing, developing relationships with current and potential shipping companies and ocean carriers, and best practices in environmental protection, operations and security.

During the visit, JAXPORT leadership also met with executives from three Jacksonville-based ocean carriers serving Puerto Rico from JAXPORT: TOTE Maritime Puerto Rico, Crowley Maritime, and Trailer Bridge.

“At our meeting on the island, we coordinated a seminar-type work session scheduled for February 2022, to establish joint protocols for hurricanes and other disasters. There will be a special session just for members of the press who can learn in detail about the supply chain. We continue working to further strengthen our close relationship with JAXPORT, so that it is of mutual benefit for both port authorities and for the residents of Puerto Rico and Jacksonville,” Pizá Batiz concluded.

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Contact PRPA: José Carmona 787-454-0905

Contact JAXPORT: Chelsea Kavanagh 904-357-3049