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ILA and NYSA Pledge to Hire Returning U.S. Veterans to Fill Labor Needs in the Port of New York and New Jersey

NORTH BERGEN, NJ and EDISON, NJ – In recognition of our nations' returning veterans, the International Longshoremen's Association and the New York Shipping Association today announced that as part of their hiring programs, veterans who fought for our country in Iraq and Afghanistan will receive preference in hiring as jobs become available in the Port of New York and New Jersey.

The NYSA represents carriers and marine terminal operators in the Port of New York and New Jersey that employ ILA members for cargo handling and other jobs. Under the policy, the industry will provide U.S. Veterans with preference in hiring when the longshoremen's register is opened to accept new employees into the industry.

As many as 1,000 jobs could become available within the port over the next few years through growth, attrition and retirement, although an exact number cannot be predicted. President Barack Obama's announcement in late October that some 40,000 U.S. troops would be returning from Iraq by the end of 2011 inspired the associations to make this commitment.

"The ILA agrees with President Obama that veterans shouldn't have to fight for jobs once they've come home from the fight overseas," said ILA President Harold Daggett. "As a Vietnam Veteran I am proud and grateful that our employers, the members of the New York Shipping Association, have joined with us to offer hope and a job to our brave American soldiers."

"The NYSA cannot think of a stronger, more diverse group than U.S. Veterans to join our workforce here in the Port of New York and New Jersey," said NYSA President Joseph Curto. "Hiring these individuals who have shown their discipline and dedication to our country is good business. These returning soldiers have the training and skills that will make them assets to our waterfront industry."

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NYSA/ILA Veteran's Announcement

NYSA and the ILA plan to reach out to Veteran's Groups, members of Congress and local leaders in the Port of New York and New Jersey to see how best they can identify returning veterans and put them to work as soon as the register is opened.

In the Port of New York and New Jersey, the ILA, headquartered in North Bergen, represents some 3,500 waterfront workers. NYSA, headquartered in Edison, represents 48 companies, including the largest shipping companies in the world that are engaged in the transport of goods to and from the United States in international trade and commerce.

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