



Andrew M. Cuomo –*Governor*

Governor Cuomo Announces \$3.4 Million Loan to Help Sandy Hook Pilots Build New Headquarters on Staten Island’s North Shore

Staten Island Base of Operations Suffered Major Damage during Hurricane Sandy; New \$5.7 Million HQ Will Retain 130 Jobs

Albany, NY (August 5, 2014)

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the approval of a \$3.4 million loan to help finance the construction of a new headquarters for the United New York & New Jersey Sandy Hook Pilots’ Benevolent Associations on the North Shore of Staten Island. The group’s previous base of operations suffered heavy damage from Superstorm Sandy and they chose to rebuild in a highly-distressed area of Staten Island after it was determined that an entirely new headquarters building was needed. The \$5.7 million project, which is expected to start construction this Fall and be completed by April 2015, will support 20 construction jobs and retain 130 jobs.

“The Sandy Hook Pilots play a central role in making sure that cargo flows through New York Harbor and the surrounding waters safely and efficiently – which translates to jobs and economic activity throughout the entire downstate region,” Governor Cuomo said. “By supporting the group’s efforts to build this new headquarters, we are helping them recover from the damage of Superstorm Sandy while also ensuring that New York remains an international hub for cargo. This is an investment in the future of both the Sandy Hook Pilots and the freight industry in New York, and I am proud that the state is moving this project forward.”

The Sandy Hook Pilots are a group of 75 highly-trained men and women that provide pilotage services to all foreign flag vessels and American vessels under register entering or departing the Port of New York and New Jersey (the Port), the Hudson River, the East

River, Atlantic City, Jamaica Bay and the Long Island Sound. This means the group is responsible for piloting roughly 95 percent of all cargo entering the Port, year round and in all weather conditions or port circumstances.

The Pilots are also responsible for significant job retention, currently providing 130 jobs in New York State. This workforce includes the pilots, shoremen, mechanics, administrators, and various other professionals. Combined, the Associations are responsible for creating more than \$45 million in direct workforce revenue each year.

The Port industry supports more than 279,200 local jobs, representing nearly \$12 billion in annual wages, and many of these jobs are allotted to increasingly-scarce high-quality skilled trades. Meanwhile, the Port generates more than \$5 billion in annual tax revenues to state and local governments.

Captain Tom Walsh, Vice President of the Sandy Hook Pilots, said, “We are very pleased and excited with this news of support from New York State regarding a loan to help finance the construction of a new building in Staten Island to replace the one destroyed by Hurricane Sandy. We greatly appreciate all of the hard work done by the JDA and New York State to understand the depth of damage and significance this project has for the port of NY. This support is a key portion for the Sandy Hook Pilots to preserve and protect the long-term partnership with the port and state, to provide such a necessary service to the maritime industry.”

The new Sandy Hook Pilots headquarters will be a 14,000 square-foot energy efficient and resilient facility that is eight feet above the FEMA Flood Plain. The facility will house a machine and engine repair shop, administration offices, pilot dispatch and operations command center, and will include the installation of back-up systems for the communications systems and power. The \$3.4 million Job Development Authority Real Estate Loan from Empire State Development (ESD) provided the \$5.7 million project with critical financing necessary to move forward.

Renderings of the structure can be found [here](#).

ESD President, CEO & Commissioner Kenneth Adams said, “The Sandy Hook Pilots provide services that are critical to a healthy New York State economy – these highly trained men and women provide the port navigational safety, protect the interests of the bi-state region, and serve the public trust. By aiding in the construction of their new headquarters, we are ensuring an influential economic driver remains based on Staten

Island while retaining 130 skilled employees and generating millions of dollars in direct workforce revenue.”

Port Authority Executive Director Pat Foye said, “The Sandy Hook Pilots are essential to ensuring safe and effective port operations throughout the Port of New York and New Jersey. A new, modern headquarters will provide jobs and economic opportunity in Staten Island and allow the Sandy Hook Pilots to continue to safely pilot cargo vessels through the port for generations to come.”

The United New York Sandy Hook Benevolent Association & United New Jersey Sandy Hook Benevolent Association history began in 1694, when New York’s colonial assembly commissioned a small group of local seamen to aid the captains of ships in navigating the difficult tidal currents and narrow passages of New York Harbor. At the time, the city’s population was only about 3,000, but its business grew with the harbor, turning into a highly competitive trade where various local pilot groups vied for the business of ships arriving off the ocean. This format continued until the Blizzard of 1888 struck New York City. While the city was paralyzed, the pilot groups were devastated as nine boats and 17 pilots were lost in the blizzard. Following this tragedy, the New York State Board of Commissioners directed the competing pilot groups to combine into a single entity.

Staten Island Borough President James Oddo said, "I am grateful that the Sandy Hook Pilots will continue to run their operations from Staten Island. After the devastating blow that Hurricane Sandy dealt the Pilots, it would have been easy to go elsewhere. The retention of 130 jobs on the Island and the construction's 20 jobs are important to the economic wellbeing of Staten Island."

Senator Diane Savino said, “I am thrilled that ESD is able to loan the Sandy Hook Pilots the money to help finance the construction of their new headquarters. ESD has wisely chosen to loan this money to an organization that keeps the New York City region moving. Whether it is a cargo ship or the Queen Mary, the pilots bring it in safely making this decision an easy one with incredible economic benefits.”

Senator Andrew Lanza said, “The Sandy Hook Pilots play a vital role in the continuity of port operations and their ability to house and dispatch pilots to ships from this location are intrinsic to the regional economic well-being of the states of New York and New Jersey. This grant will assist the Pilots in their effort to rebuild their facility which was

extensively damaged by Superstorm Sandy and will reinforce the region against port-closures in the event of a future disaster.”

Assembly Member Matthew Titone said, “The Sandy Hook Pilots have been an integral part of our harbor safety for hundreds of years. Tragically, their headquarters sustained significant damage and loss as a result of Superstorm Sandy, jeopardizing their continued presence here on Staten Island. The loan approved by Governor Cuomo will ensure that the Sandy Hook Pilots fully recover from Sandy's devastation, allowing us to have peace of mind in our harbor's security and wellbeing.”

Assembly Member Michael Cusick said, “I'd like to thank Governor Cuomo for securing the funding necessary to rebuild the Sandy Hook Pilots Headquarters after its devastation by Superstorm Sandy. The pilots provide the needed guidance for cargo ships as they enter into New York Harbor. The Sandy Hook headquarters is an important facet of our community, providing jobs to over a hundred Staten Islanders, and its reconstruction will further strengthen the bond that exists with the Sandy Hook Pilots and Staten Island. By keeping this headquarters here in Staten Island, we are investing in New York's freight industry.”

City Council Member Deborah Rose said, “For more than three centuries, the Sandy Hook Pilots have played a critical role as guardians of our harbor gateway. When Hurricane Sandy wreaked havoc on our shores in 2012, it devastated the headquarters of the pilots' benevolent associations. This loan from Gov. Andrew Cuomo ensures rebuilding on the North Shore of Staten Island so that the Sandy Hook Pilots can continue to preserve their rich history and tradition -- and contribute to the economy of our harbor and our waterfront.”

Staten Island Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Linda Baran said, "The Sandy Hook Pilots were dealt a terrible blow during Super Storm Sandy. We thank Governor Cuomo and Empire State Development for helping the Association finance a new a state-of-the art facility. The work that the Sandy Hook Pilots do in the NYC Harbor is vital, and this facility will help them continue to effectively support our region. We commend the Pilots for staying the course to re-build their headquarters in the Staten Island Community."

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