



**CHRISTOPHER M. MARKEY**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
9<sup>TH</sup> BRISTOL DISTRICT

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

COMMITTEES:  
House Committee on  
Post Audit and Oversight  
Joint Committee on Mental Health,  
Substance Use and Recovery  
Joint Committee on Revenue  
Joint Committee on State Administration  
and Regulatory Oversight

STATE HOUSE, ROOM 27G  
TEL (617) 722-2676

March 31, 2023

Mr. Anthony Sapienza, President  
New Bedford Economic Development Council  
1213 Purchase Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740

Dear Mr. Sapienza:

I write to you today to share my concern and disappointment regarding the recent conduct and statements made by your committee. My deep concern stems from the committee members' description of legitimate delegation concerns, the ethical and responsible usage of public funds for the State Pier redevelopment, as a trivial personal feud. Such a shallow and baseless analysis discredits my reputation and my objection to the process. Hopefully, the act of me putting pen to paper on this issue provides you with an understanding of how disappointed I am with the committee.

First, a little history as to why the State Pier is essential to the Commonwealth. New Bedford is one of only four deep water ports in Massachusetts, and as a result is an essential facet of our Commonwealth's economy. The management of this resource is vital to our economic health and should not be taken lightly. All oversight of the State Pier Project should be welcomed to ensure that this crucial public resource and relevant funding are used in a responsible way that benefits our community to the highest degree.

The record shows the entire New Bedford Delegation supports the development of the state pier, consistent with the 2018 Law. However, the New Bedford State Delegation has raised concerns regarding the transparency and ethics related to the project. A fair and open process is essential to not only maintaining public trust but the overall success of the redevelopment. When emails between the city government, quasi-state agencies, and private sector bidders are exchanged privately (labeled "Confidential"), it behooves the people to vet the situation for mismanagement. Especially considering the city's history poor attempts of trying to promote private developments.<sup>1</sup>

In 2016, the mayor expressed the need for emergency state funding for a refrigeration system on State Pier, and the state delegation delivered. The city claimed that it was going to lose vital imported produce

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<sup>1</sup> We all supported the concept of a new industrial park at the Whaling City Golf Course. However, requests of the delegation were ignored. In the end, not a single development even responded to the RFP created by the city.

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Letter to Regeneration Committee

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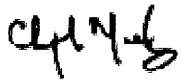
cargo if it did not obtain the refrigeration. However, since that time the city has taken few steps to capitalize on this investment. There has been no marketing for the cold storage and no effort to make any sort of return on the investment. In the past few years, there has been only one produce cargo ship.

In 2018, the delegation, in concert with Governor Baker, was able to secure 20% of the State Pier property for commercial development. Despite, this funding and support the mayor continues to be dissatisfied with the efforts of the State Delegation. The legislative delegation has attempted to be an active partner for the city throughout this entire development process and the idea that a city committee would lower themselves to throwing unsubstantiated claims is unconscionable. We want this project to be successful and benefit both our constituencies and the Commonwealth as a whole. To deliver that success, it is our right and our obligation to ensure that the project and associated public assets are dispensed in a financially responsible and ethical manner. The usage of any public money should welcome oversight for the protection of the people and the government that acts on their behalf.

I know many of the members of this committee personally, and I am deeply disappointed that this body characterized our concerted efforts as "personal". As public servants we must act in the best interest of the people in a transparent, responsible, and morally upstanding manner. The fact that I must express my frustration with this committee should speak volumes. Based on what I have witnessed and heard, I plead that you reconsider how you operate this committee. Not once did you ask for my colleagues and I to meet with you to discuss the difficulties and intricacies of the project. The behavior and rhetoric you have displayed has diminished the currency and professionalism of your committee.

I would be happy to further discuss my thoughts and concerns with this process with you. Please do not hesitate to contact my office.

With every best wish, I remain,



Christopher Markey

State Representative, 9<sup>th</sup> Bristol District

cc.

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