

Port of New Bedford awarded \$24 million for wharf rehabilitation and extension project

"We're pleased to share the news that the Port of New Bedford has been awarded a \$24 Million Federal Grant for the Leonard's Wharf Rehabilitation and Extension Project.

Senators Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), and Congressman Bill Keating (MA-09) today announced that the New Bedford Port Authority has been awarded \$24 million through the Department of Transportation's Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) for the Leonard's Wharf Rehabilitation and Extension Project in the Port of New Bedford.

"We passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to catapult projects like Leonard's Wharf from a vision in our minds to the reality of a more prosperous future for all," said Senator Markey, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. "This investment will bolster New Bedford's leadership in bringing home the fish that fills our plates and, soon enough, the offshore wind energy that lights our homes and turbocharges our clean energy revolution. I thank the Biden administration for this federal funding, and I am proud to have worked with the federal delegation, Governor Healey, Mayor Mitchell, and local leaders to help position the wind at the Whaling City's back as it enters a new phase in its historic national leadership."

"For years Leonard's Wharf has been a driver in our local economy, from serving as a pier for vessels to supporting Massachusetts' thriving fishing industry," said Senator

Warren. “Thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that my colleagues and I fought for, this nearly \$25 million in federal funding will be critical to rebuilding Leonard’s Wharf by improving its infrastructure and providing resiliency against the climate crisis.”

“The Port of New Bedford has been a key driver of the greater New Bedford economy since the days of whaling, and this federal investment in improving Leonard’s Wharf will both ensure that New Bedford continues to lead the nation in seafood landings and continues to lead in the offshore wind industry,” said Congressman Keating. “In passing the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, President Biden promised to create jobs and modernize our infrastructure, and this Port Infrastructure Development Grant is doing just that. This was a team effort lead by the Port of New Bedford and Mayor Mitchell, and I am grateful for the partnership of our federal delegation and the Healey-Driscoll Administration that helped to make it happen.”

“Our administration was proud to pledge \$18 million to the Leonard’s Wharf Rehabilitation and Extension project as part of our commitment to competing for and winning federal dollars that support our climate and economic development goals while also creating good paying union careers,” said Governor Maura Healey. “We are grateful to President Biden, Secretary Buttigieg and our Congressional partners for their historic investment in our communities, and we congratulate Mayor Mitchell and the City of New Bedford on this exciting award.”

“This grant award is a culmination of years of planning by the New Bedford Port Authority to modernize the Port so it can enable us to establish a competitive advantage in marine industries, thereby creating jobs for our residents,” said New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell. “The Leonard’s Wharf project came to fruition through a partnership across levels of government, and I am grateful in particular for the support from our federal delegation and Governor Healey.”

“This award represents a major new investment in the Port of New Bedford’s local economy and infrastructure and will support rapidly increasing multi-sector maritime activities in the harbor,” said Gordon Carr, Executive Director of the New Bedford Port Authority. “I want to commend the team here for putting together such a competitive application and thank our federal, state and local partners for their support of this much needed and important project.”

This federal funding, along with the State of Massachusetts commitment of \$18,100,000, which was spearheaded by Governor Healey and Mayor Mitchell, with support of the New Bedford state legislative delegation, represents 97 percent of the project cost of \$44,004,000.

Leonard’s Wharf, originally constructed in the 19th century as a pier for whaling vessels, is located in the central waterfront of the Port of New Bedford. It is owned by the City of New Bedford and managed by the New Bedford Port Authority, a state-created agency charged with the management of port assets. The current solid fill structure includes 1065 linear feet of steel bulkhead that was installed in 1974, and it has been used as a core commercial facility by fishing vessels ever since. Underwater inspections completed in 2021 revealed that it is at the end of its useful life. It needs to be rebuilt even to serve its traditional purpose as a commercial fishing pier. Leonard’s Wharf has also been identified in offshore wind industry studies and by offshore wind developers as a site that would greatly enhance New Bedford’s ability to stage offshore wind projects, as well as to serve as an operations and maintenance base.

The rebuilding of Leonard’s Wharf by extending and elevating the structure is required to achieve the necessary level of functionality in the Port and provide the resiliency needed from sea level rise due to climate change.

The Port Infrastructure Development Program is a discretionary

grant program administered by The United States Department of Transportation Maritime Administration (MARAD). Funds for the PIDP are awarded on a competitive basis to projects that improve the safety, efficiency, or reliability of infrastructure around, or within a port. In Fiscal Year 2023, a total of \$662,203,512 of funding was available to make awards under the Fiscal Year 2023 PIDP grant program. The New Bedford Port Authority submitted an application for the Leonard's Wharf Rehabilitation and Extension Project in May 2023.

Additional organizations and local officials who made this award possible include State Senator Mark Montigny, State Representatives Tony Cabral, Chris Hendricks, Chris Markey, Bill Straus and Paul Schmid, International Longshoremen's Association 1413-1465, Pile Drivers Local 56, Southeastern MA Building Trades Council, Greater Southeastern MA Labor Council, Southcoast Wind, Equinor, Bristol Community College, UMASS Dartmouth, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, New Bedford High School Marine Service Program, New Bedford Ocean Cluster, American Association of Port Authorities, Greater New Bedford Workforce Development, New Bedford Economic Development Council, One Southcoast, New Bedford Conservation Commission, and Fishing Partnership Support Services."-Port of New Bedford.