



NEWS RELEASE

Contact:

Elaine Labalme, (412) 996-4112, elabalme@edf.org

Ali DySard, (480) 215-5872, adysard@edf.org

Powering Florida: New Report Finds Port Electrification Strengthens Global Competitiveness

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA, February 17, 2026 -- A new report released today, *Powering Florida: Port Electrification as a Pillar for Global Competitiveness*, finds that electrifying port equipment and infrastructure can strengthen Florida's economic leadership while improving operational efficiency and long-term cost performance. The study by AECOM evaluates the cost effectiveness and feasibility of electrification across Florida's port sector. A first of its kind, the report demonstrates the financial value of electrification investments.

Florida is home to 16 seaports, more than any other state, and hosts the world's three busiest cruise ports along its east coast. Collectively, Florida's ports contribute approximately 13 percent of the state's GDP and contribute over \$117 billion to the state's economy. Investing in the future of these ports is critical to maintaining Florida's position as the world's 15th largest economy and keeping the state competitive on a global stage.

"Florida ports operate in a highly competitive global market," said Rohemir Ramirez Ballagas, Director of shipping and transport at Environmental Defense Fund (EDF). "Modernizing equipment and infrastructure helps ports attract customers, improve efficiency, and reduce long-term operating costs. This report demonstrates that leadership in electrification delivers clear business advantages."

"EDF's report on electrification at Florida's ports highlights the significant benefits—ranging from improved efficiency to modernization—of technologies like shore power and electric cargo-handling equipment. AAPA was pleased to help support its development, and we look forward to seeing the state's maritime industry continue adopting cutting-edge technology, while also strengthening supply chain reliability and enhancing operational consistency," said John Bressler, Vice President of Government Relations for the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA).

"Florida's ports are exceptionally well positioned to capitalize on the continued growth of the maritime industry. Anchored by PortMiami, Port Canaveral, and Port Everglades, the world's three busiest cruise ports, Florida also has significant untapped potential for cargo growth, particularly in containerized freight," says Philip Hadfield, AECOM's vice president, ports and marine practice leader, and U.S. marine electrification lead. "To remain competitive with other major cargo ports

along the Eastern Seaboard, Florida ports must increasingly focus on terminal optimization and densification to expand capacity and improve throughput. In today's maritime industry, this evolution is most effectively achieved through the electrification of container yards and cargo-handling equipment."

Key Findings

- While some electric cargo equipment carries higher upfront costs, the study finds that lower fuel and maintenance expenses can result in meaningful long-term savings. For example, electric rubber-tired gantry cranes (eRTGs) cost about 30 percent more up front than diesel models but deliver average annual savings of more than \$60,000 per unit over a 20-year lifespan. Electrified equipment also enables ports to stack cargo higher and use their very limited land more efficiently - a critical advantage for land-constrained Florida ports.
- Shore power infrastructure allows ships to plug into the electric grid while docked, reducing fuel use and improving local air quality. Seven Florida ports have already installed shore power or have projects underway which will attract cruise ships, 72 percent of which are anticipated to be shore power capable by 2028.
- Modernizing ports with electric equipment builds resilience by reducing reliance on imported diesel fuel, lowers maintenance needs, and enhances operational safety. Electrification can also support long-term resilience planning, including opportunities for microgrids and advanced energy management that help ports operate during extreme weather events.

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