

**Remarks for Administrator Betty Sutton
Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation
Lorain Port Authority Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
Ferry Terminal Building
Lorain, Ohio
March 18, 2014**

Good morning everyone. It is so good to be back here in this community, in my 'hometown community', if you will. I want to thank Rick Novak, Mayor Ritenauer and Representative Kaptur for inviting me to participate in this ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new ferryboat terminal. I am just so pleased to be here to help celebrate the realization of a project that I worked on when I was honored to represent this area in Congress.

I guess you could say I had something to do with helping secure the funding for the ferryboat itself and this wonderful terminal. The grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, where I now serve as Administrator of the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, was critical to the successful launching of the Jet Express and the construction of this terminal building. I know how important this project is for the Port, for this city, for the region, and for the Great Lakes maritime community.

The theme of President Obama's State of the Union address last month was "ladders of opportunity". I like to think of the Great Lakes region as the "Opportunity Belt". I can't think of a better way to provide opportunity than by making investments such as this which provide a way to move people and a way to employ people in this area. By transporting people to ball games and other events in downtown Cleveland, and now to new tourist and recreational destinations on the shores of Lake Erie, and by providing jobs to many local students and retirees, this service will be a major economic and community development asset in the region.

We have to continue to be creative in finding ways to utilize our common asset, Lake Erie, to broaden the opportunities for our area. That is what I am making a priority in my position as Seaway Administrator. No other region in North America, and perhaps the world, possesses the economic and environmental assets of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System. That is the common asset shared by all of us in the entire Great Lakes region. We are uniquely endowed with this tremendous natural resource that can be the uniting force behind other projects like the Jet Express, in communities and at ports all up and down the lakes, to help revitalize and sustain the region.

That is why I am proud to be part of this celebration today that brings to fruition a project that will give so much back to the community in so many ways. Congratulations to Rick, to Mayor Ritenauer, and to Representative Kaptur for this achievement and my sincere thanks for your tireless efforts that brought us to this great day.