

PORT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JAMES J. WHITE ON THE PASSING OF THE
HONORABLE HELEN DELICH BENTLEY:

There has never been one person more identified with the Port of Baltimore than Helen Bentley. Throughout her long and distinguished life, Helen had a deep appreciation for the important role that seaports, and specifically the Port of Baltimore, play in our economy. There was no better advocate for the Port of Baltimore and the men and women who work there than Helen. She understood the value of a port as a creator of jobs and as an economic engine and worked much of her life in various capacities to impart that value.

Helen was truly one of a kind. She was in rare air as a female newspaper reporter in the 1940's who covered the male-dominated waterfronts. Soon after, she helped educate people to the waterfront life and the Port of Baltimore through a new medium---television. Her show, "The Port That Built a City and State", lasted 15 years. In 1969 Helen was appointed by President Nixon as the first woman chair of the Federal Maritime Commission and in 1984 she was elected to Congress for the first of five terms where she was a strong advocate for U.S. economic opportunities and manufacturing.

But her long-time devotion was always focused on her pride and joy, the Port of Baltimore, which of course today is named after her and is the only port in the U.S. named after a single person. Helen was a tremendous asset for us, one that other U.S. ports did not have. She contributed to our success in many ways. Whether that meant delivering unique historical knowledge to help us on current issues, helping to mediate labor matters, or working with U.S. presidents and elected officials to assist the maritime industry and the Port of Baltimore. As a congresswoman, Helen pushed strongly for a 50-foot deep channel that the Port of Baltimore has had since 1990. That deep channel is a major reason why the Port of Baltimore is well positioned today to accommodate the largest ships in the world and continue serving as one of Maryland's top economic generators.

We say a very deep thank you to a truly incredible woman, the First Lady of the Port of Baltimore, Helen Delich Bentley. We will never forget her."