

**Speaking Notes**

**for**

**Bruce Burrows, President  
Chamber of Marine Commerce**

**2017 Annual Membership Luncheon**

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Check against delivery

*(Acknowledgments as appropriate ...)*

Thank you, Wayne, for your kind words of introduction and warm welcome. What a great way to start a new year – a new job in a dynamic new shipping organization with a world of new possibilities.

Not bad for a former railway guy.

I suspect many of you are curious to know a bit more about me and what I foresee for the Chamber's future. I'll be happy to share my thoughts with you in a moment.

Before I do, I first want to thank Wayne and members of the search committee for their vote of confidence in my ability to take on this assignment. You took a gamble bringing in a landlubber to the marine sector, for which I am most grateful.

Some might say it was a gamble, as well, for me – taking the helm of a recently-merged organization that brings together all aspects of the marine logistics chain, including customers, and steering it through the choppy waters of transition.

Happily, in addition to being someone who embraces challenges, I am the eternal optimist. I buy in to the philosophy of the anonymous sage who once said,

*“Never be afraid to try something new. Remember, amateurs built the ark. Professionals built the Titanic.”*

Rest assured, transportation and government relations are in my wheelhouse so I expect to have my sea legs quickly. Given the connectivity of today's multi-modal transportation world, there's a lot that ties the various transportation modes together, which has helped prepare me for the work we're doing here.

That experience has also made me a big believer in the power of partnerships and collaboration. Because I know that 1 + 1 often adds up to 3, 4 or 5.

I want to be clear, however, that I don't have a preconceived notion of how the Chamber should evolve. I not only recognize the importance of reaching out to members to understand their needs and priorities. I fully appreciate there are a lot of valuable lessons to be learned from the people in this room, including those who are not (yet!) members.

As much as I am here to outline my vision of a modern trade association where we leverage the combined resources and strengths of its two founding memberships, I've also come to listen and learn. Whatever strategic plan we generate in the days to come will be anchored in your experience and expertise.

I'm very much looking forward to meeting more of you and capitalizing on your insights as we navigate new economic opportunities in the months and years ahead. I invite you to play an active role in shaping the Chamber's promising future as we put marine back at the forefront of national transportation strategies.

I think this sector has enormous untapped potential that can be unleashed to create more marine traffic at lower cost. I'm convinced that inland and coastal shipping in Canada and the U.S. has tremendous capacity to grow. And current economic and political conditions are conducive to realizing this goal.

We're in the best place in years to foster a harmonized and efficient regulatory climate on both sides of the Canada/U.S. border that promotes greater competitiveness, new investment and continued growth.

All signs point to reduced red tape and fees for businesses across the U.S. under

President Trump. We hope the new American administration and the government here in Canada can work together to streamline the hodgepodge of regulations that currently govern the bi-national waters within which we operate.

With our united and stronger voice, we can better advocate for harmonized, practical, science-based environmental regulations.

Equally important, we have a Canadian government committed to major infrastructure investments, which are desperately needed across all sectors. This could generate increased volumes of materials being shipped for those projects.

South of the border, the new administration is set to roll out a trillion dollars in infrastructure spending – if the President delivers on campaign promises. This means there could be a whole lot more cargo being shipped on the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence and our coasts to deliver these projects. Imagine the shipments of steel-making materials, alone, that would be needed. Investments in icebreaking resources, waterways, locks and portside infrastructure, and more efficient delivery of marine navigational services would unleash the full sustainable potential of shipping.

But these aren't the only things going our way. In today's environmentally- and climate-conscious world, we have a green advantage that other modes of transportation can only envy.

With our fuel-efficient ships, we have a lower carbon footprint than road or rail. And we enjoy low congestion relative to other major trade corridors.

Marine shipping is an attractive alternative for governments committed to a sustainable transportation future, with the capacity to do even more to accelerate both economic and environmental progress. Speaking of the environment, I

believe our industry's commitments can be more aggressively expressed and backed up with further action.

Our industry also has the advantage of a great safety story. For example, we have a fantastic track record in moving oil and gas products to market, problem-free.

Of course, there are still a lot of unknowns that can come into play — global economic conditions, geopolitical instability and potential incoming U.S. decisions around trade agreements such as NAFTA.

But, we are not solely at the mercy of outside forces. I've discovered during my first 30 days on the job that Chamber members have worked hard, within their spheres of influence, to maximize efficiencies and minimize costs.

Just look at the technological innovations. Things like hands-free mooring and remote operations at St. Lawrence Seaway locks and new 3D navigation. Both are having a positive impact on both productivity and profitability.

Added to that, we have new ships continuing to come on-stream that are at the cutting edge of safety technology and eco-efficiency.

Innovation should, and will, continue. I believe we can move closer to year-round operations, for example, as we remove barriers to what I call "seasonal optimization." We will work closely with the Canadian Coast Guard and the Seaway to find ways to keep our waterways open to optimize the shipping season.

We are becoming bigger players beyond the lakes and coastal waters, with some of you already active in the Arctic and other parts of the world. There's a whole new world out there to explore and capitalize on in our globe-shrinking, connected economy.

I am encouraged that many of you in this room are actively pursuing new markets. Many of our Great Lakes ports are chasing more project cargo – and even some container – business with their shipping partners. And passenger cruising is a burgeoning market that is bringing in more customers and revenues.

But, maybe more important than even these significant advantages, the Chamber is an incredible asset in and of itself. This is a unique organization in the transportation world – one that brings all the key players together, including our shipper customers. There's value-added in listening to the views of end users and working with them to develop a system that helps everyone grow and prosper.

Most significant, speaking with one voice on behalf of so many industries that intersect with the marine sector is a tremendous advantage. It's remarkable from a government relations standpoint, believe me, having worked closely with rail and more recently air.

My goal is to ensure that government, the media and our stakeholders see what I see – a very bright future for our sector. A modern trade association that will leverage the combined resources and strengths of our valued members for an industry that is ready and able to deliver even more economic and environmental benefits.

You will hear more about my vision in the coming months. I'll be putting a sharper focus on branding, communications and government relations to ensure this great story gets out. And that our advocacy efforts are not only heard, but heeded.

My immediate priorities are to meet as many members as I can to identify concrete examples of the positive impacts we have on the economy and society. I'll make sure government decision makers become familiar with these facts.

I also need your input into the kinds of improvements you want to see in the Chamber's operations.

I'll be building a strong team that brings together the best of the original Chamber of Marine Commerce and the Canadian Shipowners Association to carry out this work.

I am also looking at our data collection and research and analysis capabilities to see if we can better stay on top of industry trends. This will help members seize new opportunities as they emerge while also supporting our advocacy goals.

With these essential steps underway, I will collaborate with the Board, Committee members and individuals like you to develop a strategic plan to move this great organization forward.

It's also an opportune time to kick off this exciting venture, because Canada is celebrating its 150th birthday.

For the past century and a half, shipping on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway has been an economic lifeline for people on both sides of the Canada/U.S. border. In fact, you can go back much further to the first explorers who used canoes to discover areas only accessible by water. Shipping's proven track record of efficient, sustainable and safe transportation has been vital to domestic growth and global trade.

There's every reason to celebrate this proud heritage. But I believe the best is yet to come as we chart new waters for our members in the 21st Century.

I am excited by this opportunity to build a strong, united association that can take

the marine industry 'up the locks' to the next level. Thank you for welcoming me aboard – I'm looking forward to the ride.