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Press Release

NOVEMBER 5, 2007

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PORT OF OLYMPIA WELCOMES *USNS BRITTIN*

The *USNS Brittin* docked at the Port of Olympia today to discharge a cargo of military equipment returning from Iraq. The cargo was used to support the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division Stryker Brigade Combat Team that celebrated its return to Ft. Lewis in October after a 15-month deployment.

“We are proud to welcome this vessel to Olympia,” said Port Commission President Paul Telford. “The Olympian recently covered the homecoming of the Brigade soldiers. This cargo has supported some brave Americans, and we are pleased to see them - and their equipment - return home.”

After the vessel leaves port, part of the cargo will be driven or trucked back to Ft. Lewis while the rest will be sent to other destinations. Some of the soldiers who manned these vehicles in Iraq will soon be driving them up I-5.

“While we know that there are strong feelings in our community about the war in Iraq, we hope any demonstrations while the vessel or cargo are at the Port will continue the spirit of the homecoming and be peaceful.” said Commissioner Telford.

The military has a long and valued presence in Thurston County and at the Port. This is the 13th military vessel to call at the Port since 2004. The Port Commission has consistently reaffirmed its support of the Port’s handling of military cargoes and the significant economic role played by the military in Thurston County.

The Port of Olympia is considered an alternative port to Tacoma as a “strategic port” for the military. The Port’s marine terminal infrastructure is well suited for this type of cargo, and the Port’s longshore labor force is well respected for their experienced handling of these cargoes and vessels.

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About the Port of Olympia

The southernmost deepwater port on Puget Sound, the Port of Olympia is Thurston County's partner in economic opportunity. The Port owns and operates a diversified international shipping terminal, an established niche facility that handles a range of breakbulk and project cargoes. The Port also owns and operates a strategically located regional airport, a vibrant 656-slip recreational marina and boat haulout/repair facility, and a thriving real estate division. A community port, it generates an estimated 2,600 jobs in Thurston County and indirectly over 5,000 jobs in Washington State.