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Federal Maritime Commission Announces New Chairman Cordero

The U.S. Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) announced that Commissioner Mario Cordero will replace Commissioner Richard A. Lidinsky as Chairman, effective April 1, 2013. Lidinsky submitted his resignation as Chairman to President Obama after holding the position since September 2009. He plans to continue to serve the FMC as a Commissioner.

Chairman Cordero was nominated by President Obama and sworn in as Commissioner on June 3, 2011, for a three-year term. He is the FMC's first Latino Commissioner.

Based on an April 2 FMC press release, it appears that the Commission will continue to focus on increasing exports, the Panama Canal expansion, and increasing Latin American trade. The FMC will also likely continue the review of its regulations governing Ocean Transportation Intermediaries (OTI), a Lidinsky-era initiative that affects almost 5,000 companies with active OTI licenses. At this time it is uncertain whether Chairman Cordero will continue other Lidinsky priorities, including the Container Freight Index and Derivatives Working Group, which was launched in 2011.

While the FMC's recent initiatives have focused on stimulating the economy by increasing exports, Chairman Cordero is best known for his focus on environmental issues. During his eight years of service as Long Beach Harbor Commissioner, he led the Green Port Policy, a comprehensive program to reduce the environmental impact of port operations. The policy was initiated after Environmental Protection Agency Director Lisa Jackson estimated that port-related diesel pollution led to 5,000 premature deaths per year in Southern California. Chairman Cordero notably fought against the Port's settlement of a lawsuit filed by the American Trucking Association because the settlement removed parts of an air pollution-reduction plan. He was the only Commissioner to vote against the settlement.

While in Long Beach, Chairman Cordero was an attorney in private practice and a political science professor at Long Beach City College. He also held a position on the Long Beach Community Development Commission, and served as Vice Chair of the Long Beach Ethics Review Task Force.

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