

EXECUTIVE VIEW

Here's to Helen Delich Bentley, Pride of the Port

Congratulations, Helen Delich Bentley, on your induction into the International Maritime Hall of Fame! You have been a welcome fixture here for over 50 years, and we are proud to have you as our First Lady of the Port of Baltimore.

Helen Bentley's accomplishments are far too numerous to fit on one page, but as we all know, she is a goal-oriented person who doesn't take no for an answer. Her determination has paved the way for women in the workplace and has made the Port of Baltimore a major player in the global maritime world. Helen's integrity and no-nonsense style captures the respect of both dockside labor union members and officials and heads of international shipping lines.

Helen wound up here because *The Baltimore Sun* was the only big city newspaper to offer her a serious reporter's beat, which opened the door to the maritime beat in 1948. In those days, the only newspaper jobs offered to women were on the society page. (Had she taken the path of least resistance, I'm certain Helen would have her footprints on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.) Fortunately for us, she insisted on charting a new course.

Helen wasn't content with simply breaking the proverbial glass ceiling for women — she shattered it when offered a seat on the Federal Maritime Commission, making her the highest-ranking woman in President Nixon's administration and the first woman to head a federal regulatory agency.

In 1980, when her predecessor in

Congress was threatening the viability of the Port of Baltimore by blocking the dredging of a 50-foot channel, Helen took matters into her own hands and ran against him on that issue. Although victory eluded her on the first two attempts, this feisty lady delivered on that promise upon becoming a member of Congress in 1985. The Port of Baltimore now has a 50-foot channel, which was included in the last bill passed in the 99th Congress, an unprecedented feat for a freshman member of Congress. Throughout Helen's 10 years of Congressional service, the Port of Baltimore and the maritime industry were her foremost concerns.

Helen, you are a stalwart booster of the Port of Baltimore, and the feelings are reciprocated. You are the sweetheart of Baltimore's maritime industry, and an indefatigable octogenarian. As we look to the future and focus on our strategic plan, infrastructure improvements and technological upgrades, your insight and expertise are more valuable now than ever before. Helen, we look forward to having you with us for many years to come.



James J. White
Executive Director



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