
**The Economic Impact of
Georgia's Deepwater Ports
On Georgia's Economy in FY 2025**

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Executive Summary

This summary highlights some of the findings regarding the economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports on Georgia's economy in fiscal year 2025. The ensuing sections contain the comprehensive technical report.

The statewide economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports in fiscal year 2025 includes:

- **\$181 billion in sales (12 percent of Georgia's total sales);**
- **\$80 billion in state GDP (9 percent of Georgia's total GDP);**
- **\$44 billion in income (6 percent of Georgia's total personal income);**
- **605,616 full- and part-time jobs (12 percent of Georgia's total employment);**
- **\$10 billion in federal taxes;**
- **\$3 billion in state taxes; and**
- **\$3 billion in local taxes.**

These economic impacts demonstrate that continued emphasis on imports and exports through Georgia's deepwater ports translates into jobs, higher incomes, greater production of goods and services, and revenue collections for government. Ports operations help to foster growth of the state's manufacturing, agriculture, warehousing, transportation, distribution, logistics, forestry, and mining industries,

Output (Sales) Impacts

Measured in the simplest and broadest terms, the total economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports on Georgia's economy is \$181 billion, which is 12 percent of Georgia's output. Out of the total, \$102 billion represents initial spending, or direct economic impact; \$79 billion is indirect and induced spending, or the re-spending (multiplier) impact. Dividing the total output impact (\$181 billion) by initial spending (\$102 billion) yields an average multiplier value of 1.77. On average, therefore, every dollar initially spent by the ports industry and ports users generates an additional 77 cents for the state's economy.

State GDP (Value Added) Impacts

Measured in terms of GDP or value added, Georgia's deepwater ports contribute \$80 billion to the state's economy, which is 9 percent of Georgia's total GDP. Out of the total, \$36 billion represents the direct effects of initial spending, or the direct economic impact; \$44 billion is indirect and induced spending, or the re-spending (multiplier) impact.

Income Impacts

Measured in terms of income, Georgia's deepwater ports contributed \$44 billion to the state's economy, which is 6 percent of Georgia's total personal income. Of the total, \$20 billion represents the direct effects of initial spending, or the direct economic impact; \$23 billion is indirect and induced spending, or the re-spending (multiplier) impact.

Employment Impacts

The economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports probably is most easily understood in terms of its effects on employment. Measured in these terms, Georgia's deepwater ports support 605,616 full- and part-time jobs, which is 12 percent of Georgia's total employment. This means that one job out of every eight is in some way dependent on the ports. Of the total employment impact, 261,279 jobs represent the direct effects of initial spending, or the direct economic impact; 344,337 jobs constitute the indirect and induced effect of spending, or the re-spending impact on employment.

More than half (53 percent) of the jobs are concentrated in three industry groups: 148,430 manufacturing jobs (25 percent); 128,271 transportation/warehousing jobs (21 percent); and 45,014 agriculture/forestry jobs (7 percent).

Tax Impacts

State: The total economic impact of Georgia's ports on tax collections by state government is \$3 billion.

Local: The total economic impact of Georgia's ports on tax collections by local governments is \$3 billion.

Federal: The total economic impact of Georgia's ports on tax collections by the federal government is \$10 billion.

Deepwater ports are one of Georgia's strongest economic engines, fostering the development of virtually every industry. The ports are especially supportive of other forms of transportation, manufacturing, wholesale/distribution centers, agriculture, forestry, and mining. The outstanding performance of Georgia's deepwater ports relative to other American ports reflects strong competitive advantages that allowed Georgia's ports to expand their share of activities. These advantages are largely the result of strategic investments in port facilities by the state over many years.

Georgia's deepwater ports industry consists of public marine terminals in Savannah and Brunswick owned by the Georgia Ports Authority as well as private marine terminals. The ports are thriving, and Savannah's port is one of the fastest growing container ports in the world. The superb performance of Georgia's ports relative to other ports reflects strong comparative advantages that allowed them to expand their shares of regional and national waterborne cargo traffic. These comparative advantages are the result of a series of strategic expansions over many years.

It is obvious that Georgia's deepwater ports create substantial economic impacts on the state in terms of output (sales), state GDP, income, employment, and tax revenues for federal, state, and local governments. Nonetheless, this study provides a quantitative assessment of the changes in overall economic activity as a result of the presence and operations of Georgia's deepwater ports in fiscal year 2025.

The facilities owned by the Georgia Ports Authority in Savannah and Brunswick will be referred to as the Port of Savannah and the Port of Brunswick, respectively; and cargo volumes, expenditures, and impact estimates for these facilities will be reported separately from those for private facilities/docks. The amounts expressed in this report (including the executive summary and appendices) are reported in 2025 dollars.

Economic Impact Highlights

The fundamental finding of this study is that the strategic decisions by state government to invest public resources in the two deepwater ports have contributed to substantial economic activity in Georgia. The statewide economic impact of the deepwater ports in fiscal year 2025 includes:

- \$181 billion in sales (12 percent of Georgia's total sales);
- \$80 billion in state GDP (9 percent of Georgia's total GDP);
- \$44 billion in income (6 percent of Georgia's total personal income);
- 605,616 full- and part-time jobs (12 percent of Georgia's total employment);
- \$10 billion in federal taxes;
- \$3 billion in state taxes; and
- \$3 billion in local taxes.

Measured in the simplest and broadest possible terms, the total economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports on Georgia's economy is \$181 billion. This amount represents the combined impact of the ports industry and ports users on output, which can be thought of as the equivalent of business revenue, sales, or gross receipts. The \$181 billion output impact accounts for 12 percent of Georgia's total output. Out of the \$181 billion, \$13 billion (7 percent) represents the results from the ports industry and \$168 billion (93 percent) represents the results from ports users.

Of the total output impact, \$102 billion represents direct economic impact; and \$79 billion is indirect and induced spending, or the re-spending (multiplier) impact. Dividing the total output impact (\$181 billion) by direct spending (\$102 billion) yields an average multiplier value of 1.77. On average, therefore, every dollar initially spent by either the ports industry or ports users generates an additional 77 cents for the economy.

Expressed in other dimensions, the ports industry and port users together support \$80 billion in state GDP and \$44 billion in income, which account for 9 percent and 6 percent of Georgia's GDP and total personal income, respectively. The total economic impact on employment is 605,616 full- and part-time jobs, or almost one job out of every eight. The combined impact of the ports industry and ports users on state tax collections is \$3 billion. The combined impact of the ports industry and ports users on local tax collections is \$3 billion. On federal tax collections it is \$10 billion.

Container traffic is the primary source of economic impact. The distribution of total economic impacts of cargo-based activity at the Georgia Ports Authority's facilities in Savannah and Brunswick by mode of cargo indicates that containerized cargo accounts for 95 percent of the reported economic impacts. Auto/vehicle cargo accounts for 4 percent of the reported impacts, and dry bulk, breakbulk, and liquid bulk cargo each account for less than 1 percent of output impacts.

The Concept of Ports Economic Impact

The total economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports consists of (1) direct spending by the ports industry, (2) direct spending by ports users, and (3) the secondary or indirect and induced spending—often referred to as the multiplier effects—created as direct expenditures by either the ports industry or ports users are re-spent.

The ports industry is defined to include economic activity (spending) that involves the transportation of waterborne cargo and ports services, including the ports themselves, the companies engaged in deepwater transportation as well as companies that provide ship services, and companies that provide inland transportation of waterborne cargo. Ports investment (capital expenditures) for additions and/or improvements to Georgia's deepwater ports also are included as part of the ports industry. This definition of the ports industry is identical to the definition used by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration in the MARAD Port Economic Impact Kit. Thus, the ports industry includes activities that take place on the vessel, at the terminal, and during the inland movement of cargo. Since the firms and enterprises that provide these activities locate in Georgia because of the existence of the ports, all their activity (spending) can be counted as direct economic impact.

Ports users are mainly manufacturers, agricultural firms, wholesalers, distributors, and warehousing and storage firms that use the ports to transport materials and/or products. Although most users are importers and exporters, some ship materials or products to and/or from domestic locations. All the economic activity (spending) generated by ports users whose decision to locate, remain, and/or expand in Georgia hinges on the presence of these deepwater ports can be counted as direct economic impact. But since most ports users are only partially dependent on the presence of Georgia's deepwater ports, only a portion of their total economic activity is counted as direct economic impact. For example, firms that use Georgia's deepwater ports due to cost advantages over other ports or other modes of transportation are only partially dependent on Georgia's ports. Also, users that only ship a portion of their production and materials through Georgia's deepwater ports are only partially dependent on the ports. To avoid double counting, ports users' activity is defined to exclude their transportation expenditures associated with the waterborne cargo that is handled by Georgia's ports industry.

Secondary spending often is referred to as the multiplier effect of direct spending. There are two types of secondary spending: indirect spending and induced spending. Indirect spending refers to the changes in inter-industry purchases as Georgia's industries respond to the additional demands triggered by spending by either the ports industry or ports users. It consists of the ripples of activity that are created when the ports industry or ports users purchase goods or services from other industries located in the state. Induced spending refers to the additional demands triggered by spending by households as their income increases due to changes in production. Basically, the induced impact captures the ripples of activity that are created when households spend more due to the increases in their earnings that were generated by the direct and indirect spending.

The sum of the direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts is the total economic impact, which often is expressed in terms of output (sales), state GDP, income, or employment. Output is gross receipts or sales, plus or minus inventory. Total output impacts are the most inclusive, largest, measure of economic impact. Because of their size, output impacts typically are emphasized in economic impact studies and receive much media attention. One problem with output as a measure of economic impact, however, is that it includes the value of inputs produced by other industries, which means that there inevitably is some double counting of economic activity. The other measures of economic impact (GDP, income, and employment) are free from double counting and provide a much more realistic measure of the true economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports.

State GDP is value added, which consists of employee compensation, proprietors' income, other property income,

and indirect business taxes. Value added is equivalent to gross output (sales or receipts and other operating income, commodity taxes, and inventory change) minus intermediate inputs (consumption of goods and services purchased from other industries or imported). It is often referred to as the state-level counterpart of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP). Income is all forms of employment income, including wages, salaries, and proprietors' incomes. It does not include non-wage compensation (e.g., pensions and health insurance), transfer payments (e.g., welfare or social security benefits), or unearned income (e.g., dividends, interest, and rent). Employment includes total wage and salary employees as well as self-employed individuals. It encompasses both full- and part-time jobs and is measured in annual average jobs.

Methodology

Estimating the economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports involved several steps. First, data regarding tonnage by type and capital expenditures were obtained from the Georgia Ports Authority. The tonnage data were imported into the U.S. Department of Transportation's MARAD Port Economic Impact Kit to estimate the direct spending by the ports industry for each cargo mode. The IMPLAN economic impact assessment software system was used to estimate the indirect and induced economic impacts of direct spending for each mode of cargo and capital expenditures. Second, ports users' spending was estimated. Port-level exports and imports commodity data were extracted from USA Trade Online for the Port of Savannah and the Port of Brunswick. In addition, data from surveys of ports users were used to determine the degree to which they depend on Georgia's deepwater ports. To help correct for non-response and/or incomplete responses and to update the analysis, several types of government and administrative data were used to assess the proportion of revenue or sales in various industries that could be attributed to ports usage. Once initial spending by ports users was estimated, IMPLAN was used to estimate the direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts of the ports-related portion of spending by users. Finally, the statewide economic impact estimates were allocated to individual counties based on each county's economic structure and PIERS trade data regarding county-level imports and exports (measured in terms of short tons).

Estimating the Ports Industry's Economic Impact

A revised version of the U.S. Department of Transportation's MARAD port economic impact model that was built specifically for Georgia was used to estimate the direct spending by the ports industry for each cargo mode. A general discussion of the model, including its structure, methods, and use can be found in the two-volume *MARAD Port Economic Impact Kit*.

The Georgia Ports Authority provided the fiscal year 2025 data on cargo volume (import and export) by mode of transportation for the Savannah and Brunswick facilities. The cargo volume reported for the Port of Savannah includes data for the Garden City and Ocean terminals. The cargo volume reported for the Port of Brunswick includes data for the Mayor's Point Terminal, Colonel's Island, and the Brunswick East River/Lanier Docks. Table 1 summarizes cargo volume for cars, containerized cargo, breakbulk cargo, dry bulk cargo, and liquid bulk cargo. Cargo volume is expressed on a per-vehicle basis for auto/vehicle cargo; a per-TEU (Twenty Foot Equivalent Unit) basis for containerized cargo; and a per-short ton (2,000 pounds) for breakbulk, dry bulk, and liquid bulk. In addition, the Georgia Ports Authority provided estimates of cargo volume for the private facilities/docks based on an analysis of data obtained from PIERS (Table 2). The Georgia Ports Authority also provided capital expenditures (ports investment) in FY 2025 for the facilities that it owns. Capital expenditures by the private facilities/docks are not included in this analysis, however.

Estimating the Ports Users' Economic Impact

Commodity-level data for vessel borne imports and exports were extracted from USA Trade Online on February 19, 2026 for the Port of Savannah and the Port of Brunswick. Vessel borne exports were adjusted to account for origin of movement (Georgia), and vessel borne imports were adjusted to account for state of destination (Georgia). In addition, data and insights from two surveys were used to estimate the port users' economic impacts. For example, in

Spring/Summer 2014, the Selig Center collaborated with the Georgia Governor's Development Council and the Center of Innovation for Logistics to survey representatives from Georgia's strategic industries (as well as economic development and transportation experts) regarding Georgia's ports and their impact on transportation competitiveness. Also, a confidential survey of the entire population of current users of the Georgia Ports Authority's facilities was conducted in 2003 to identify the industries that utilize the ports, their sales, and the extent to which they depend on the ports. *The Economic Impact of Georgia's Deepwater Ports on Georgia's Economy in FY 2003* (April 2004) contains both the survey instrument and a brief summary of responses. Secondary sources of information supplemented and updated the information obtained from USA Trade Online and the two surveys. These include: (1) The U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis' historical data on gross domestic product and output, gross state product, and personal income. (2) The U.S. Department of Labor's and the Georgia Department of Labor's historical data on employment. (3) U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, Office of Ports and Domestic Shipping on the economic impact of ports users at the national level. (4) Studies of the economic impacts of the U.S. Deepwater Port System prepared for the American Association of Port Authorities. (5) The Georgia Department of Community Affairs and the Department of Industry Trade and Tourism's summary information from their survey of manufacturers regarding their international trade activity and current and future exports of their products. (6) County-level data provided by PIERS on the volume and estimated value of imports and exports for Georgia.

Based on an analysis of data from the Georgia Ports Authority, USA Trade Online, PIERS, surveys, and secondary information sources, it was determined that port-related sales (output) totaled \$100 billion. Manufacturers account for 77 percent of port-related sales, while wholesale/distribution/warehousing/storage activities accounted for 15 percent of port-related sales, and agriculture, forestry, and mining accounted for the remaining 8 percent.

The IMPLAN modeling system was used to estimate the direct, indirect, and induced economic impact of ports users' initial spending. IMPLAN estimated that \$100 billion in initial spending by port users represents \$96 billion in direct spending to Georgia's economy. A detailed discussion of the IMPLAN modeling system, including its structure, methods, and use, can be found at www.implan.com.

Results

The total economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports on output, GDP, income, and employment is summarized in Table 3. The direct, indirect plus induced, and the total economic impacts of Georgia's deepwater ports in terms of output, income, and gross state product are reported in Table 4. Similarly, Table 5 and Table 6 report the employment and tax impacts, respectively. Table 7 reports the overall multiplier values for output, employment, income, and GDP. Table 8 reports the total economic impacts of cargo-based activity by mode of cargo at the Georgia Ports Authority's operations in Savannah and Brunswick. Table 9 shows the economic impacts per 1,000 TEUs of container cargo at the Port of Savannah. Table 10 details the total employment impact by county. Table 11 reports employment impacts aggregated by IMPLAN for NAICS 2-digit industry groups.

■ Output Impacts ■

Measured in the broadest terms, the total economic impact of the Port of Savannah and the Port of Brunswick on Georgia's economy is \$181 billion, which is 12 percent of Georgia's output. Out of the total, \$13 billion (7 percent) represents the results from the ports industry, of which the GPA's operations at the Port of Savannah contribute 85 percent. Ports users' total output impact—\$168 billion—is thirteen times greater than that of the ports industry. Indeed, ports users account for 93 percent of the total output impact of Georgia's deepwater ports. The ports exist to serve their users so it is not surprising that the majority of the economic impacts are generated by ports users rather than the industry itself.

Of the total output impact, \$102 billion represents initial spending, or direct economic impact; \$79 billion is indirect and induced spending, or the re-spending (multiplier) impact. Dividing the total output impact (\$181 billion) by direct spending (\$102 billion) yields an average multiplier value of 1.77. On average, therefore, every dollar initially spent by either the ports industry or ports users generates an additional 77 cents for the state's economy.

■ State GDP (Value Added) Impacts

Measured in terms of state GDP or value added, Georgia's deepwater ports contributed \$80 billion to the state's economy, which is 9 percent of Georgia's total GDP. Out of the total GDP impact, \$6 billion (8 percent) represents the results from the ports industry. The GPA's operations at the Port of Savannah contribute 84 percent of this amount. However, the \$73 billion GDP impact attributed to ports users is about eleven times greater than that of the ports industry, so users account for 92 percent of the total GDP impact of Georgia's deepwater ports.

Of the total GDP impact, \$36 billion represents the direct effects of initial spending, or the direct economic impact; \$44 billion is indirect and induced spending, or the re-spending (multiplier) impact. Dividing the total GDP impact (\$80 billion) by the direct GDP impact (\$36 billion) yields an average multiplier value of 2.20. On average, therefore, every dollar of direct GDP produced by the ports industry and ports users yields an additional 120 cents for the state's economy.

■ Income Impacts ■

Measured in terms of income, Georgia's deepwater ports contributed \$44 billion to the state's economy, which is 6 percent of Georgia's total personal income. Out of the total, \$4 billion (9 percent) represents the results from the ports industry. The GPA's operations at the Port of Savannah contribute 84 percent of this amount, but ports users' \$40 billion income impact is ten times greater. Indeed, users account for 91 percent of the total income impact of Georgia's deepwater ports.

Of the total income impact, \$20 billion represents the direct effects of initial spending, or the direct economic impact; \$23 billion is indirect and induced spending, or the re-spending (multiplier) impact. Dividing the total income impact (\$44 billion) by the direct income impact (\$20 billion) yields an average multiplier value of 2.17. On average, therefore, every dollar of direct income produced by the ports industry and ports users generates an additional 117 cents for the state's economy.

■ Employment Impacts ■

The economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports probably is most easily understood in terms of its effects on employment. Measured in these terms, Georgia's deepwater ports support 605,616 full- and part-time jobs, which equal 12 percent of Georgia's total employment—based on the household survey definition of employment. This means that one job out of every eight is in some way dependent on the ports and supports the finding by the American Association of Ports Authorities that U.S. ports supported 21.8 million jobs in 2023, accounting for about 1 in 8 jobs within the American workforce.

Out of the 605,616 jobs, 60,181 (10 percent) represent the results from the ports industry. The GPA's operations at the Port of Savannah contribute 84 percent of these jobs, but ports users' 45,435-job impact is nine times greater, so users account for 90 percent of the total employment impact of Georgia's deepwater ports.

Of the total employment impact, 261,279 jobs represent the direct effects of initial spending, or the direct economic impact; 344,337 jobs constitute the indirect and induced effect of spending, or the re-spending (multiplier) impact. Dividing the total job impact (605,616 jobs) by the direct job impact (261,279 jobs) yields an average multiplier value of 2.3. So, on average, each job created directly by the ports industry and ports users yields an additional 1.3 jobs in the state.

■ Tax Impacts ■

Spending by the ports industry and ports users generate substantial tax revenue for Georgia's state government. The total economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports on tax collections by state government is \$3 billion; the impact on local government tax collections is \$3 billion; and the impact on federal tax collections is \$10 billion.

Comparisons to Previous Estimates

In 2025, the Georgia Ports Authority retained the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business to estimate the economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports on the state's economy. Economic impact estimates for FY 2024 were published in *The Economic Impact of Georgia's Deepwater Ports: FY 2024* (August 2025). Although similar methods were used, industry aggregations for the port industry were different. The FY 2024 impacts of Georgia's deepwater ports were \$174 billion in sales and \$77 billion in state GDP. The output impact estimated for FY 2025 therefore is 4 percent higher than reported for FY 2024. The state GDP impact reported for FY 2025 is 3 percent higher than in FY 2024. Differences in employment impacts estimated for FY 2025 and FY2024 mainly reflect differences in methods (lower employment multipliers) and the FY2024 and FY2025 estimates therefore are not comparable. That said, the FY 2025 employment impact (605,616 jobs) is about the same as the FY 2023 employment impact (609,197 jobs). The relatively steady employment impacts are a positive finding given that over this period statewide employment in manufacturing, warehousing, and transportation industries declined significantly and labor productivity increased substantially.

In the 2024 report, the FY 2023 impacts of Georgia's deepwater ports were \$171 billion in sales, \$72 billion in state GDP, \$40 billion in income, and 609,197 full- and part-time jobs.

In the 2022 report, the FY 2021 impacts of Georgia's deepwater ports were 561,087 full- and part-time jobs, \$140 billion in sales, \$59 billion in state GDP, and \$33 billion in income.

In the 2020 report, the FY 2019 impacts of Georgia's deepwater ports were 496,719 full- and part-time jobs, \$122 billion in sales, \$51 billion in state GDP, and \$29 billion in income.

In the 2018 report, the FY 2017 impacts of Georgia's deepwater ports were 439,220 full- and part-time jobs, \$106 billion in sales, \$44 billion in state GDP, and \$25 billion in income.

In the 2015 report, the FY 2014 impacts of Georgia's deepwater ports were 369,193 full- and part-time jobs, \$84 billion in sales, \$33 billion in state GDP, and \$20 billion in income.

In the 2012 report, the FY 2011 impacts of Georgia's deepwater ports were 352,146 full- and part-time jobs, \$66.9 billion in sales, \$32.4 billion in state GDP, and \$18.5 billion in income.

In the 2010 report, the FY 2009 impacts of Georgia's deepwater ports were \$61.7 billion in sales, \$26.8 billion in state GDP, \$15.5 billion in income, and 295,443 full- and part-time jobs.

In the 2007 report, the FY 2006 impact of Georgia's deepwater ports were \$55.8 billion in sales, \$24.8 billion in state GDP, \$14.9 billion in income, and 286,476 full- and part-time jobs.

In the 2004 report, the FY 2003 impact of Georgia's deepwater ports were \$35.4 billion in sales, \$17.1 billion in gross state product, \$10.8 billion in income, and 275,968 full- and part-time jobs.

In 1997, Booz-Allen & Hamilton, Inc. conducted a study and published its results (for 1996) in *Economic Impacts of Georgia's Deepwater Ports of Savannah and Brunswick* (March 20, 1998). Instead of using actual cargo volumes and standard macroeconomic input-output modeling systems (e.g., MARAD Port Economic Impact Kit, IMPLAN, RIMS, or REMI) to measure direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts, Booz-Allen & Hamilton relied primarily on direct survey methods, which they said is "somewhat unique." Due to the unique character of their methods as well as the use of non-conventional definitions of standard economic impact terms, it is very difficult to make meaningful direct comparisons of their results to the results of this study, or to those of other port economic impact studies.

Booz-Allen & Hamilton found that the total economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports on output (sales) and employment were \$22.3 billion and 76,672 jobs, respectively. Their estimates of the economic impact on tax collections by state and local governments was \$569 million, and that the economic impact on wages was \$1.7 billion. The estimates produced by the Terry College of Business (based on data for FY 2003) were considerably larger. The order of magnitude of Booz-Allen & Hamilton's output impact (\$22.3 billion), however, appears to be somewhat reasonable considering that: (1) the Port of Savannah and the Port of Brunswick both experienced exceptionally rapid growth in cargo volumes from 1996-2003 (implying that direct spending by the ports industry was much smaller in 1996 than it was in 2003); (2) Georgia's overall economy was much smaller in 1996 than it was in 2003 (implying that ports-related impacts were much smaller in 1996 than in 2003); (3) the survey-based approach did not capture all of the direct eco-

conomic impacts; (4) the survey-based approach is incapable of capturing many of the indirect economic impacts; and (5) the survey-based approach does not capture any of the induced economic impacts.

In 1999, Georgia Southern University applied more conventional input-output modeling techniques to re-estimate the ports' 1996 economic impact. However, it appears that they relied on Booz-Allen & Hamilton's estimate of direct economic impact. Nonetheless, Georgia Southern's use of the REMI model to re-estimate both the indirect and induced economic impacts more fully captured the indirect and induced economic impacts of the direct spending (as estimated by Booz-Allen & Hamilton). Consequently, their impact estimates were higher than those produced by Booz-Allen & Hamilton.

Closing Comment

This study investigates the economic impact of Georgia's deepwater ports, and finds substantial economic impacts in terms of output (gross receipts or sales), state GDP, income, employment, state and local tax revenues, and federal tax revenues. The findings are based on analytical methods that are standard in regional economics and economic consulting.

Table 1

**Cargo Volume by Mode of Transportation
at the Georgia Ports Authority's Facilities in Savannah and Brunswick
(Import and Export) in FY 2025**

Cargo Type	Mode	GPA Total	Savannah	Brunswick	Percent of Total by Mode
Autos					
	Long Dist. Truck	0	0	0	0
	Short Dist. Truck	718,389	0	718,389	82
	Rail	152,386	0	52,386	18
	Total	870,775	0	870,775	100
Containerized					
	Long Dist. Truck	2,269,909	2,269,909	0	40
	Short Dist. Truck	2,441,006	2,441,006	0	43
	Rail	992,372	992,372	0	17
	Total	5,703,287	5,703,287	0	100
Breakbulk					
	Long Dist. Truck	70,523	0	70,523	21
	Short Dist. Truck	155,770	14,723	141,047	46
	Rail	111,353	0	111,353	33
	Total	337,646	14,723	322,923	100
Dry Bulk					
	Long Dist. Truck	0	0	0	0
	Short Dist. Truck	1,050,342	0	1,050,342	71
	Rail	429,013	0	429,013	29
	Total	1,479,355	0	1,479,355	100
Liquid Bulk					
	Long Dist. Truck	168,485	48,751	119,734	27
	Short Dist. Truck	236,529	234,085	2,444	39
	Rail	208,114	208,114	0	34
	Total	613,128	490,950	122,178	100

Note: Cargo volume is expressed on a per-vehicle basis for auto/vehicle cargo; a per-TEU ("Twenty-Foot Equivalent") basis for containerized cargo; a per-short ton (2,000 pounds) basis for breakbulk, dry bulk, and liquid bulk cargo. Cargo volume is for the public facilities owned by the Georgia Ports Authority and does not include cargo volume for private facilities/docks. Breakbulk does not include autos, which are reported separately.

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 2

**Cargo Volume for Private Facilities/Docks
in Savannah and Brunswick
(Import and Export) in FY 2025**

<u>Cargo Type</u>	<u>Cargo Volume Total</u>
Breakbulk	1,287,927
Dry Bulk	2,958,309
Liquid Bulk	1,139,639
Total	5,385,875

Note: Cargo volume is expressed on a per-short ton (2,000 pounds) basis. Cargo volume is for the privately owned facilities/docks and does not include cargo volume for facilities owned by the Georgia Ports Authority.

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth (based on data provided by PIERS), Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 3

**Summary of the Economic Impact
of Georgia's Deepwater Ports on Georgia
in Fiscal Year 2025
(millions of 2025 dollars)**

	<u>Output</u>	<u>State GDP</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Employment (jobs)</u>
Ports Industry	12,919	6,454	3,912	60,181
Savannah Cargo-Based Activity	10,936	5,393	3,261	50,755
Brunswick Cargo-Based Activity	587	283	173	2,675
Ports Investment	988	584	356	4,853
Private Facilities/Docks	407	196	122	1,898
Ports Users	168,179	73,306	39,601	545,435
Total Output/Revenue Impact	181,098	79,760	43,513	605,616

Note: The ports industry refers to firms/enterprises located in Georgia because of the ports' existence. Savannah and Brunswick cargo-based activity and port investment refer to impacts generated by the public facilities owned by the Georgia Ports Authority. Private facilities/docks refers to impacts generated by privately owned facilities/docks. Ports users are firms/enterprises that utilize ports facilities (primarily importers and exporters).

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 4

**Economic Impact of Georgia's Deepwater Ports
on Output (Revenue), Income, and State GDP
in Georgia, Fiscal Year 2025
(millions of 2025 dollars)**

	Direct Economic Impact on Output/Revenue	Indirect & Induced Economic Impact on Output/Revenue	Total Economic Impact on Output/Revenue
Ports Industry	6,318	6,601	12,219
Savannah Cargo-Based Activity	5,302	5,635	10,936
Brunswick Cargo-Based Activity	281	306	587
Ports Investment	540	448	988
Private Facilities/Docks	195	212	407
Ports Users	96,081	72,098	168,179
Total Output/Revenue Impact	102,398	78,699	181,098
	Direct Economic Impact on Income	Indirect & Induced Economic Impact on Income	Total Economic Impact on Income
Ports Industry	1,630	2,282	3,912
Savannah Cargo-Based Activity	1,293	1,968	3,261
Brunswick Cargo-Based Activity	67	106	173
Ports Investment	221	135	356
Private Facilities/Docks	50	72	122
Ports Users	18,428	21,173	39,601
Total Income Impact	20,058	23,455	43,513
	Direct Economic Impact on State GDP	Indirect & Induced Economic Impact on State GDP	Total Economic Impact on State GDP
Ports Industry	2,471	3,983	6,454
Savannah Cargo-Based Activity	1,980	3,413	5,393
Brunswick Cargo-Based Activity	99	184	283
Ports Investment	322	262	584
Private Facilities/Docks	71	125	196
Ports Users	33,788	39,517	73,306
Total State GDP	36,259	43,501	79,760

Note: The ports industry refers to firms/enterprises located in Georgia because of the ports' existence. Savannah and Brunswick cargo-based activity and port investment refer to impacts generated by the public facilities owned by the Georgia Ports Authority. Private facilities/docks refers to impacts generated by privately owned facilities/docks. Ports users are firms/enterprises that utilize ports facilities (primarily importers and exporters).

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 5

**Economic Impact of Georgia's Deepwater Ports
on Employment in Georgia, Fiscal Year 2025
(full- and part-time jobs)**

	Direct Economic Impact on Employment	Indirect & Induced Economic Impact on Employment	Total Economic Impact on Employment
Ports Industry	24,840	35,341	60,181
Savannah Cargo-Based Activity	20,203	30,552	50,755
Brunswick Cargo-Based Activity	1,037	1,638	2,675
Ports Investment	2,820	2,033	4,853
Private Facilities/Docks	780	1,118	1,898
Ports Users	236,439	308,996	545,435
Total Employment Impact	261,279	344,337	605,616

Note: The ports industry refers to firms/enterprises located in Georgia because of the ports' existence. Savannah and Brunswick cargo-based activity and ports investment refer to impacts generated by the public facilities owned by the Georgia Ports Authority. Private facilities/docks refers to impacts generated by privately owned facilities/docks. Ports users are firms/enterprises (primarily importers and exporters) that utilize ports facilities.

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 6

**Economic Impact of Georgia's Deepwater Ports
on Tax Collections in Georgia, Fiscal Year 2025
(millions of 2025 dollars)**

	Federal Taxes	State Taxes	Local Taxes
Ports Industry	896.9	237.3	264.0
Savannah Cargo-Based Activity	750.2	201.8	228.1
Brunswick Cargo-Based Activity	39.7	10.5	11.7
Ports Investment	79.3	17.7	15.9
Private Facilities/Docks	27.7	7.3	8.2
Ports Users	9,502.2	2,422.4	2,553.9
Total	10,399.1	2,659.7	2,817.9

Note: The ports industry refers to firms/enterprises located in Georgia because of the ports' existence. Savannah and Brunswick cargo-based activity and ports investment refer to impacts generated by the public facilities owned by the Georgia Ports Authority. Private facilities/docks refers to impacts generated by privately owned facilities/docks. Ports users are firms/enterprises (primarily importers and exporters) that utilize ports facilities.

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 7

**Overall Multipliers for
Output, Employment, Income, and State GDP,
Fiscal Year 2025**

	Multiplier Values			
	Output	Employment	Income	State GDP
Ports Industry	2.0	2.4	2.4	2.6
Savannah Cargo-Based Activity	2.1	2.5	2.5	2.7
Brunswick Cargo-Based Activity	2.1	2.6	2.6	2.9
Ports Investment	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.8
Private Facilities/Docks	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.8
Ports Users	1.8	2.3	2.1	2.2
Total	1.8	2.3	2.2	2.2

Note: The ports industry refers to firms/enterprises located in Georgia because of the ports' existence. Savannah and Brunswick cargo-based activity and ports investment refer to impacts generated by the public facilities owned by the Georgia Ports Authority. Private facilities/docks refers to impacts generated by privately owned facilities/docks. Ports users are firms/enterprises (primarily importers and exporters) that utilize ports facilities.

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 8

**Distribution of Total Economic Impacts of Cargo-Based Activity
at the Ports of Savannah and Brunswick by Mode of Cargo,
Fiscal Year 2025**

Mode/Impact	Output/Revenue (Mil. \$2025)	State GDP (Mil. \$2025)	Income (Mil. \$2025)	Employment (jobs)
Containerized	10,897	5,373	3,249	50,567
Breakbulk	46	22	14	224
Auto/Vehicle	446	215	131	2,016
Dry Bulk	74	35	21	322
Liquid Bulk	61	31	19	301
Total	11,523	5,675	3,434	53,430
Percent of Total				
Containerized	94.6	94.7	94.6	94.6
Breakbulk	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Auto/Vehicle	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.8
Dry Bulk	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Liquid Bulk	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 9

**Economic Impact of 1,000 TEUs of Container Traffic on Georgia's Economy,
Fiscal Year 2025
(thousands of 2025 dollars and jobs)**

<u>Economic Impact</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Ports Users</u>	<u>Ports Industry</u>
Output/Revenue	28,843	26,933	1,911
State GDP/Value Added	12,705	11,763	942
Income	6,914	6,345	570
Employment (jobs)	96	87	9
Local Taxes	449	409	40
State Taxes	423	388	35
Federal Taxes	1,653	1,522	131

The estimates represent the total economic impact (direct, indirect, and induced) of 1,000 TEUs of container traffic at the Port of Savannah of the Ports Industry and Ports Users combined. The estimates are scalable (up or down) within reasonable limits.

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 10

**Economic Impact of Georgia's Deepwater Ports
On County-Level Employment in Georgia, Fiscal Year 2025
(full- and part-time jobs)**

<u>County</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Employment</u>
Appling	746	Dade	633
Atkinson	400	Dawson	1,059
Bacon	565	Decatur	941
Baker	24	DeKalb	29,635
Baldwin	1,279	Dodge	428
Banks	534	Dooley	173
Barrow	2,709	Dougherty	4,606
Bartow	8,446	Douglas	5,641
Ben Hill	810	Early	317
Berrien	502	Echols	108
Bibb	9,894	Effingham	4,232
Bleckley	184	Elbert	964
Brantley	324	Emanuel	884
Brooks	403	Evans	693
Bryan	5,258	Fannin	570
Bulloch	7,234	Fayette	5,936
Burke	680	Floyd	5,041
Butts	949	Forsyth	9,497
Calhoun	99	Franklin	1,068
Camden	1,164	Fulton	100,872
Candler	297	Gilmer	895
Carroll	5,178	Glascok	16
Catoosa	1,440	Glynn	6,666
Charlton	238	Gordon	4,381
Chatham	77,732	Grady	660
Chattahoochee	140	Greene	740
Chattooga	637	Gwinnett	44,463
Cherokee	7,158	Habersham	1,878
Clarke	6,475	Hall	14,659
Clay	71	Hancock	64
Clayton	20,747	Haralson	984
Clinch	405	Harris	857
Cobb	41,946	Hart	1,112
Coffee	2,437	Heard	220
Colquitt	1,843	Henry	7,991
Columbia	3,589	Houston	4,637
Cook	491	Irwin	127
Coweta	5,687	Jackson	8,497
Crawford	115	Jasper	221
Crisp	932	Jeff Davis	2,475

(continued)

Table 10 (Continued)

**Economic Impact of Georgia's Deepwater Ports
On County-Level Employment in Georgia, Fiscal Year 2025
(full- and part-time jobs)**

<u>County</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Employment</u>
Jefferson	733	Richmond	9,168
Jenkins	110	Rockdale	4,012
Johnson	95	Schley	80
Jones	271	Screven	290
Lamar	588	Seminole	309
Lanier	94	Spalding	2,367
Laurens	1,734	Stephens	1,048
Lee	675	Stewart	115
Liberty	7,344	Sumter	1,503
Lincoln	126	Talbot	58
Long	50	Taliaferro	7
Lowndes	4,880	Tattnall	1,190
Lumpkin	676	Taylor	132
McDuffie	938	Telfair	161
McIntosh	175	Terrell	243
Macon	394	Thomas	2,236
Madison	334	Tift	2,378
Marion	178	Toombs	1,545
Meriwether	592	Towns	230
Miller	100	Treutlen	74
Mitchell	934	Troup	7,283
Monroe	589	Turner	211
Montgomery	163	Twiggs	138
Morgan	1,166	Union	686
Murray	2,092	Upson	680
Muscogee	7,668	Walker	2,071
Newton	3,533	Walton	2,679
Oconee	1,451	Ware	1,410
Oglethorpe	199	Warren	251
Paulding	2,226	Washington	3,345
Peach	1,397	Wayne	3,776
Pickens	876	Webster	29
Pierce	518	Wheeler	89
Pike	335	White	857
Polk	1,319	Whitfield	13,118
Pulaski	273	Wilcox	61
Putnam	636	Wilkes	251
Quitman	14	Wilkinson	570
Rabun	492	Worth	254
Randolph	142	Georgia Total	605,616

Note: The allocation of port users' jobs to the counties is partially based on the location of the company on the bill of lading and is not necessarily the origin/destination of the cargo.

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia (www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

Table 11

**Economic Impact of Georgia's Deepwater Ports
on Employment by Industry in Fiscal Year 2025**

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Employment (jobs)</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
1 - 11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	45,014	7.4
2 - 21 Mining, Quarrying, Oil/Gas Extraction	5,681	0.9
3 - 22 Utilities	1,729	0.3
4 - 23 Construction	15,521	2.6
5 - 31-33 Manufacturing	148,430	24.5
6 - 42 Wholesale Trade	29,555	4.9
7 - 44-45 Retail Trade	29,902	4.9
8 - 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	128,271	21.2
9 - 51 Information	6,957	1.1
10 - 52 Finance and Insurance	20,775	3.4
11 - 53 Real Estate and Rental, Leasing	17,326	2.9
12 - 54 Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	24,567	4.1
13 - 55 Management of Companies, Enterprises	10,687	1.8
14 - 56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management, Remediation Services	32,708	5.4
15 - 61 Educational Services	4,676	0.8
16 - 62 Health Care and Social Assistance	30,777	5.1
17 - 71 Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	6,720	1.1
18 - 72 Accommodation and Food Services	24,013	4.0
19 - 81 Other Services (except Public Administration)	19,072	3.1
20 - 9A Government Enterprises	3,236	0.5
Total, All Industries	605,616	100.0

Source: Estimated by the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia
(www.selig.uga.edu), 2026.

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