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Quonset's Port of Davisville's Pier 1 South is open for business - by Steven J. King

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Steven J. King

Local and state leaders joined the Quonset Development Corp. for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the reopening of the Port of Davisville's Pier 1 South after 19 months of construction.

Quonset Business Park is home to 239 companies and more than 14,000 jobs, including one of every five manufacturing jobs in the state. The business park is built around its robust multi-modal infrastructure that combines this seaport with an airport, rail network and dedicated highway access.

Shown (from left) are: R.I. senator Lou DiPalma, R.I. rep. Robert Craven, Sr., U.S. senator Jack Reed, R.I. Commerce secretary Liz Tanner, QDC managing director Steven J. King, U.S. rep. Gabe Amo and U.S. senator Sheldon Whitehouse.

Quonset's world-class infrastructure is one of the keys to our success. Thanks to the support of our partners in government and in the private sector, Quonset can continue to invest in and upgrade that infrastructure, including at the Port of Davisville.

This reconstruction project replaced more than 1,500 wooden pilings that had been in Narragansett Bay since Pier 1 was built in 1941 with 150 new steel pilings and a new concrete deck. The south face of the pier, which is being refurbished in phases, is now open, and construction has begun on the north and east faces. Completion of the final phase is expected by summer 2026.

The reconstruction of Pier 1 is part of Quonset's Port of Davisville master plan, a \$234 million infrastructure development initiative to replace the infrastructure originally built by the U.S. Navy in the 1940s and 1950s. The upgrades will support the creation of 1,100 projected new port jobs and add a new 50-year service life to the port's infrastructure.

The Port of Davisville is one of the top 10 auto importers in North America and an emerging hub for offshore wind. Rhode Island's only public port, Davisville supports more than 1,600 jobs and generates \$374 million in annual economic output.

With a 42% year-to-date increase in automobile imports over the first nine months of 2023 and a 23% increase in offshore wind vessel traffic over all of 2023, the Port of Davisville is experiencing a significant rise in demand for berthing space.

Upgrades to the Port of Davisville allow Quonset to meet this increased demand and continue to serve as the region's leading engine for economic development and job growth.

Steven J. King, PE, is the managing director of the Quonset Development Corp., North Kingstown, R.I.