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What is the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund?

The Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) was created by Congress in 1986 to provide funding for harbor and channel dredging. Funds generated by the Harbor Maintenance Tax (a 0.125% ad valorem tax on imports) are deposited into the HMTF. Annually, only half of the funds deposited into the HMTF are actually utilized for harbor and channel dredging. The rest is appropriated by Congress for other, unrelated expenditures.