

# **The Maritime Goods Movement Act for the 21st Century**

*Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell's legislation would strengthen American ports and enhance the competitiveness of the American export economy.*

## **The Problem:**

The Harbor Maintenance Tax, a long-established tax on imports that funds the operation and maintenance of America's large and small ports, is not being fully collected. Because of that, American ports, which drive job creation and anchor our export economy, can't make the infrastructure investments they need to support American businesses.

*Currently, shippers can avoid paying the tax* – which important ports nationwide rely on – by shipping goods through other ports in Canada and Mexico and then transporting those goods into our country via truck and rail.

This reduces the funds available to keep American ports in operating condition.

Additionally, on average, only half of the diminished tax revenue that is collected is actually spent each year, even though our ports are in desperate need of more maintenance.

## **The Solution:**

### *The Maritime Goods Movement Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Senator Murray and Senator Cantwell are addressing this threat to America's maritime economy with legislation to create a more equitable playing field for American ports. The Maritime Goods Movement Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century would:

- Repeal the Harbor Maintenance Tax and replace it with the Maritime Goods Movement User Fee, the proceeds of which would be fully available to Congress to provide for port operation and maintenance. This would double the amount of funds available for American ports, which will help our export economy thrive.
- Ensure that shippers cannot avoid the Maritime Goods Movement User Fee by using ports in Canada and Mexico.
- Set aside a portion of the user fee for low-use, remote, and subsistence harbors that are at a competitive disadvantage for federal funding.
- Create a competitive grant program using a percentage of the collected user fees to improve the U.S. intermodal transportation system so imported goods and goods for export can more efficiently reach their intended destinations.
- Pay for expanded infrastructure investments by closing loopholes that allow the largest oil and gas companies in America to receive billions of dollars in taxpayer subsidies every year, even though they enjoy profits in excess of \$100 billion annually.

## **Support:**

The Maritime Goods Movement Act has already received strong support from large and small ports including the Ports of Seattle, Tacoma, Grays Harbor, and Vancouver. Key stakeholders like the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association and the Washington Council on International Trade have also endorsed the legislation.