

October 20, 2014

Mr. Robert McEllrath
President
International Longshore and Warehouse Union
1188 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94109

Mr. James McKenna
Chairman and CEO
Pacific Maritime Association
555 Market Street, Third Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Mr. McEllrath and Mr. McKenna:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing manufacturers, farmers and agribusinesses, wholesalers, retailers, importers, exporters, distributors, and transportation and logistics providers we again call upon the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) to quickly conclude a new labor agreement. Many U.S. and Canadian stakeholders we represent are already experiencing severe negative effects of delayed shipments. Unless addressed by the two negotiating parties, this situation will soon start to have a broader negative impact on the U.S. and broader North American economies.

We fully respect the collective bargaining process and understand the importance of the remaining issues for both management and labor. However, our members are concerned that there has been no visible progress in the negotiations since August, when the ILWU and PMA announced a “tentative deal” on health benefits. As we noted in our letters of May 9th and July 9th, the financial and economic situation for thousands of importers and exporters who rely on the West Coast ports, and their millions of employees and business partners, rest on the timely conclusion of a new port labor contract.

We understand the need for the media blackout during the negotiations, and we appreciate the parties remaining at the table throughout the process. However, we are now at a point where a new contract must be finalized soon in order to allay growing concerns of thousands of businesses who rely on West Coast ports for orderly and timely supply chain operations. The congestion problems at key West Coast ports in both the U.S. and Canada are getting worse each day, and the absence of a new signed contract between the ILWU and PMA is a significant contributing factor. Many of the stakeholders that we represent are already experiencing significant adverse effects of delays in moving their cargo. Again, this will soon start to have a negative impact on the overall economy.

We ask that both parties recognize that time is of the essence. We encourage you to stay the course, complete the contract negotiations as soon as possible and work to resolve the current congestion issues without further interrupting the flow of commerce. We believe that a new agreement can be reached that will be fair to both parties and ensure the continued success and competitiveness of West Coast ports, your organizations and the stakeholders who rely on the timely and efficient movement of goods through the ports.

Sincerely,

Agriculture Transportation Coalition (AgTC)
Airforwarders Association
Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers

American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA)
American Association of Exporters and Importers
American Farm Bureau Federation

American Cotton Shippers Association
 American Home Furnishings Alliance (AHFA)
 American Import Shippers Association
 American Meat Institute
 American Pyrotechnics Association
 American Soybean Association
 American Trucking Associations
 Association of Global Automakers, Inc.
 Auto Care Association
 BizFed
 California Business Properties Association
 California Business Roundtable
 California Chamber of Commerce
 California Retailers Association
 California Trucking Association
 CAWA – Representing the Automotive Parts Industry
 Coalition of New England Companies for Trade (CONNECT)
 Columbia River Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association
 Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)
 Cookware Manufacturers Association
 Corn Refiners Association
 Customs Brokers and Forwarders Assoc. of Northern California
 Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders of Washington State
 Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S., Inc.
 Emergency Committee for American Trade (ECAT)
 Express Association of America
 Fashion Accessories Shippers Association (FASA)
 Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America
 Foreign Trade Association of Southern California
 Gamma Industry Processing Alliance (GIPA)
 Green Coffee Association
 Harbor Association of Industry & Commerce
 Inland Action
 Inland Empire Logistics Council
 Institute of Makers of Explosives
 International Casual Furnishings Association
 International Fragrance Association, North America
 International Irradiation Association
 Intermodal Motor Carriers Conference (IMCC)
 International Source Suppliers and Producers Association (ISSPA)
 International Warehouse and Logistics Association
 International Wood Products Association
 Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association
 Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
 Los Angeles Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association
 Meat Importers Council of America
 Michigan Retailers Association
 Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association
 Motorcycle Industry Council
 NAIOP SoCal
 National Association of Beverage Importers
 National Association of Chemical Distributors
 National Association of Egg Farmers
 National Association of Manufacturers
 National Chicken Council
 National Cotton Council
 National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America
 National Grain and Feed Association
 National Oilseed Processors Association
 National Pork Producers Council
 National Retail Federation
 National Shippers Strategic Transportation Council (NASSTRAC)
 National Turkey Federation
 Nebraska Retail Federation
 North American Export Grain Association
 North American Meat Association
 North American Shippers Association, Inc.
 Outdoor Industry Association
 Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI)
 Pacific Coast Council of Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders
 PNASA – Pacific Northwest Asia Shippers Association
 PPAI - Promotional Products Association International
 Propeller Club of Los Angeles-Long Beach
 Retail Council of Canada
 Retail Industry Leaders Association
 San Diego Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association
 San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
 Specialized Furniture Carriers
 Sports & Fitness Industry Association
 The Hardwood Federation
 The National Industrial Transportation League
 The State Chamber of Oklahoma
 The Waterfront Coalition
 Transportation Intermediaries Association
 Toy Industry Association

Travel Goods Association (TGA)
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Dairy Export Council
U.S. Hide, Skin and Leather Association
United States Council for International Business
(USCIB)
United States Fashion Industry Association

USA Poultry & Egg Export Council
Washington Council on International Trade
Washington Retail Association
Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America
Wine and Spirits Shippers Association
Women in International Trade - Los Angeles
Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce

CC: The Honorable Eric Garcetti, Mayor of Los Angeles
The Honorable Robert Garcia, Mayor of Long Beach
Mr. Gene Seroka, Executive Director, Port of Los Angeles
Mr. Jon Slingerup, Chief Executive, Port of Long Beach