



November 21, 2014

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We appreciate your attention to the situation at West Coast ports and urge you to reconsider your decision not to assign federal mediators to help the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) resolve pending contract negotiations. We believe that mediation has become a critical and necessary tool because the parties have been unsuccessful in concluding discussions after seven months. Lack of resolution, we believe, has negatively affected the efficient flow of commerce through ports along the West Coast for several weeks now.

The ports of Seattle and Tacoma comprise the third-largest container gateway in North America and represent a critical node in the United States-Asia trade gateway on which American and global businesses and consumers depend. Moreover, Puget Sound serves as the principle gateway for waterborne commerce to the state of Alaska, which has limited surface transportation connections to the lower forty-eight states. Marine cargo activity on our docks is a major economic driver in many communities, supporting thousands of stable, good-paying jobs. This current situation affects people who work directly for our ports, shipping companies, terminal operators and other marine industries – overall activities that on an annual basis contribute \$378 million in local and state taxes to support schools, roads, police and fire departments.

Moreover, beneficial cargo owners across many states have reached out to us to share tales of the crippling effect of the current situation. Examples include: agriculture exporters are unable to get perishable goods to market resulting in major losses during peak season, manufacturers have had to shut down operations and send employees home, shippers and transloaders are incurring higher costs for trucker-standby time, and there are examples of storage and rail car demurrage due to backlog at ports. We also are aware of shippers who have diverted their cargo to non-U.S. ports, resulting in the loss of American jobs to foreign competitors. The bottom line is that across many sectors from agriculture to manufacturing, workers are not getting paid during the Thanksgiving season and some businesses are closing down.

This uncertainty and delay is not tenable. We hope that mediation assistance from the federal government will help both parties find a fair and equitable resolution to the negotiations as soon as possible, to get Americans back to work and allow commerce to move efficiently.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. If we can be of any assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theodore J. Fick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Theodore J. Fick
CEO
Port of Seattle

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Wolfe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

John Wolfe
CEO
Port of Tacoma