

May 9, 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 United States manufacturers, farmers, wholesalers, retailers, distributors, and transportation and logistics providers we urge you to make every attempt possible to conclude an agreement on a new contract before the current contract expires on June 30. It is critical that a new agreement be reached without disruptions to the movement of freight.

We know that there are important and difficult issues for both parties to resolve. We urge you to stay at the negotiating table until a deal is reached even if negotiations extend beyond the current contract expiration. Failure to reach an agreement will have serious economy-wide impacts. The potential for disruptions in the flow of commerce at West Coast ports is creating uncertainty in a fragile economic climate and forcing many businesses to develop contingency plans that come at a significant cost to jobs and our economic competitiveness.

We all know the impact of the West Coast lockout 10 years ago on the U.S. economy, including the businesses which rely on the ports to move their goods and on the employees who depend on fully operational ports. While the circumstances were different at that time, these same companies just experienced the tumultuous negotiations impacting the East Coast/Gulf Coast ports where constant threats of disruption created high levels of uncertainty at a tremendous cost. The West Coast ports and their customers cannot afford to go through a similar situation again.

We urge both parties to begin negotiations with the goal of finalizing a long term labor agreement without any disruptions to the supply chain. Our organizations believe that both parties can reach an agreement that will ensure the continued success and competitiveness of these ports for the foreseeable future. Your consideration of our concerns is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Agriculture Transportation Coalition - AgTC
Airforwarders Association
Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers
Alliance of Wisconsin Retailers
American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA)
American Association of Exporters and Importers
American Chemistry Council
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Home Furnishings Alliance
American Import Shippers Association
American Meat Institute

American Pyrotechnics Association
American Trucking Associations
Association of Global Automakers, Inc.
Auto Care Association
California Business Properties Association
California Retailers Association
California Trucking Association
Coalition of New England Companies for Trade - CONECT
Cookware Manufacturers Association
Fashion Accessories Shippers Association (FASA)
Footwear Distributors and Retailers Association
Gamma Industry Processing Alliance (GIPA)
Institute of Makers of Explosives
International Irradiation Association
International Source Suppliers and Producer's Association (ISSPA)
International Wood Products Association
Los Angeles Area Chamber Of Commerce
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association
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 Grain and Feed Association
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Retail Federation
NASSTRAC, Inc.
North American Export Grain Association
North American Meat Association
North American Shippers Association, Inc.
Outdoor Industry Association
Pacific Coast Council of Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders –The PCC
Retail Industry Leaders Association
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association
Specialized Furniture Carriers
Sports & Fitness Industry Association
The Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S., Inc.
The Hardwood Federation
The National Industrial Transportation League
The State Chamber of Oklahoma
Toy Industry Association
Transportation Intermediaries Association
Travel Goods Association (TGA)
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Dairy Export Council
U.S. Hide, Skin and Leather Association
United Fresh Produce Association

United States Fashion Industry Association
USA Poultry & Egg Export Council
Washington Council on International Trade
Washington Retail Association
Waterfront Coalition
Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America, Inc.
Wine Institute