November 12, 2014

Mr. Robert McEllrath  
President 
International Longshore Warehouse Union  
1188 Franklin Street, Fourth Floor  
San Francisco, California 94109

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

Dear Mr. McEllrath and Mr. McKenna,

As representatives of communities which depend on strong and thriving ports, we strongly urge a swift resolution to the current contract negotiations. With exports and imports comprising thirty percent of our nation's gross domestic product, a swift resolution is vital for the economy of the Pacific Northwest and our country as a whole.

As you know, in the economy of the Pacific Northwest, specialty crop producers play a significant role. As such, they rely on ports to export their products to countries around the world where they have built reputations as reliable providers. Any interruption in terminal operations negatively impacts their customer relationships, export sales, and packing operations. And the exports are significant. Last year, over nineteen billion dollars' worth of agricultural goods went through Washington's ports. This statistic highlights the importance of trade to our economy and emphasizes how heavily we rely on our ports, which serve as a gateway to Asia. Because of this proximity to Asia, our ports support and drive economic activity far beyond our immediate borders.

We recognize the challenges before you and urge you to come to a swift resolution, because our workers, farmers, consumers, businesses and families all depend on it.

Sincerely,

Dave Reichert  
Member of Congress

Doc Hastings  
Member of Congress

Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress

Jaime Herrera Beutler  
Member of Congress
KURT SCHRADER  
Member of Congress

GREG WALDEN  
Member of Congress

MIKE SIMPSON  
Member of Congress