

April 15, 2016

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,

We would like to express our great appreciation for recent comments made with regard to preventing future disruptions at ports where the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) are present. It is reassuring to know that your organizations appreciate the staggering impact that the 2014-2015 West Coast port disruptions had on shippers, workers, and port users, as well as the regional and national economy, and that you are committed to preventing a repeat of that devastating incident well in advance of the current contract expiration date on July 1, 2019.

We understand that your organizations have been discussing options to prevent future disruptions in the event that a new contract is not finalized prior to the current contract's expiration. We appreciate that you are already engaging on this difficult topic and encourage continued discussions with the goal of a thoughtful, forward-thinking approach aimed at preventing future disruptions.

To be clear, because the workers, farmers, and businesses in our communities rely on the efficient movement of goods, we place great importance on the normal and functional operation of our ports. During the 2014-2015 disruption, farmers, manufacturers, and retailers across the western U.S. suffered hundreds of millions of dollars in damages because they could not get their goods to market. Foreign market share was lost, which not only hurt businesses trying to use the ports, but as you are aware, the shippers who transport goods, the workers who load and unload cargo, and the ports that rely on a steady stream of traffic were negatively impacted.

Again, thank you for your early engagement on this issue that has serious implications for the economy of our region and the country as a whole. We hope to work with you as we continue our work in Congress to strengthen and increase freight mobility and develop proactive solutions to prevent future disruptions.

Sincerely,