

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 11, 2014

Mr. Robert McEllrath
President
International Longshore and Warehouse Union

Mr. James C. McKenna
President and CEO
Pacific Maritime Association

Dear Mr. McEllrath and Mr. McKenna:

We write to express our concerns about the ongoing contract negotiations and the impact that the lack of an agreement is having on our districts' economy and our constituents.

With more than 13,600 longshore, clerk, and foreman workers, ports along our West Coast serve a vital role for shipping and moving products throughout the world. These ports not only support our economy but also have a direct impact on working families and businesses across the country and our districts.

We are aware that some of the ports along the West Coast face ongoing issues outside the direct scope of contract negotiations, it is imperative that both sides reach a contract agreement as soon as possible. There must be a sustained effort to remedy chassis shortages, improve the handling of larger ships, and repair deficient roads in our freight gateways. However, operating our ports—especially during the busy holiday season—without an agreement in place will not help address the current delays.

We have heard from farmers who are waiting on feed for their animals, businesses waiting on products produced in Asia to arrive in the United States, and wineries attempting to ship to customers in time for the holidays. These delays in shipments will not only impact the businesses and their employees, but will have ripple effects throughout our local communities and the U.S. economy as well. This issue must be addressed.

We recognize the challenges before you, and know that both parties have been diligently negotiating over the last several months. We urge negotiations to continue in good faith, and implore both sides to reach a mutually agreeable solution as soon as possible.

Sincerely,


JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress


MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress



SAM FARR
Member of Congress



JANICE HAHN
Member of Congress



ED ROYCE
Member of Congress



JEFF DENHAM
Member of Congress



DOUG LAMALFA
Member of Congress



JUDY CHU
Member of Congress



JACKIE SPEIER
Member of Congress



SCOTT PETERS
Member of Congress



LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ
Member of Congress



DAVID G. VALADAO
Member of Congress



KEVIN MCCARTHY
Member of Congress



JOHN GARAMENDI
Member of Congress



KEN CALVERT
Member of Congress