

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

[[DATE]]

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President-elect
Presidential Transition Headquarters
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20270

Dear President Trump,

As our nation faces the looming threat of debilitating disruptions to international trade and supply chains due to port shutdowns up and down the East and Gulf Coast, it is critical we avoid disruption to our nation's economy. We are writing to urge you to engage and work with the outgoing administration and the other critical parties to successfully resolve this issue for the sake of our economy.

If the International Longshoremen's Association and United States Maritime Alliance do not reach a new labor agreement by January 15, 2025, operations at the covered container ports will cease, creating massive disruption impacting every corner of our country and harming our economy. The United States already experienced disruptive port closures for three days in October due to a labor strike, which are a preview of the potential impacts of further closures. We urge you to take immediate action to avoid catastrophe. Consumers and businesses nationwide would feel significant effects of a cease in East and Gulf Coast port operations. Closures will disrupt the flow of goods, create logjams throughout every stage of the supply chain, and result in severe economic hardship for port workers and their families, putting their livelihoods at risk.

Should a strike occur, JP Morgan analysts have estimated the U.S. economy would lose \$5 billion per day.¹ In 2002, an 11-day lockout on the West Coast resulted in losses of a billion dollars a day and took six months to de-congest the ports.² In addition, ocean carriers such as Hapag-Lloyd have already announced two surcharges, the Work Disruption Surcharge (WDS) and the Work Interruption Destination Surcharge (WID), that will take effect in the event of a strike.³ Cargo backlog and decongestion coupled with the threat of additional surcharges will only make the U.S. less competitive on the global trade market.

With these potential impacts in mind, we strongly urge you, as President-elect, to work closely with the parties to mediate and facilitate a constructive dialogue that leads to fair outcomes, as the respective departments have done in the past. This is a prime opportunity to build trust, ensure our nation's economic stability, and safeguard the future of our ports. For these reasons, we appreciate your attention to this urgent matter.

[[CLOSING]]

[[SIGNATURES]]

¹ <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-port-strike-ends-clearing-long-ship-queues-will-take-time-2024-10-04/>

² <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/2024/09/27/port-workers-strike-supply-chain-impact-higher-prices/75384739007/>

³ <https://www.freightwaves.com/news/hapag-lloyd-us-port-strike-surcharges-to-go-into-effect-same-day-as-trump-inauguration>