Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 30, 2015

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:

On behalf of our constituents, who depend on trade and the efficient flow of commerce, we strongly urge both parties to quickly resolve their differences and put an end to the nine months of negotiations. The impact of the current negotiations on port operations and the movement of goods is felt in all parts of the supply chain and across the entire country. Our constituents are losing business, letting employees go, and worrying about the future. As trade supports over 38 million jobs across the country, we strongly urge your organizations to reach an agreement, because the inability to reach consumers outside our borders impacts jobs here at home.

The efficient flow of goods is critical to our regional and national economy. In fact, last year, according to the Department of Commerce, imports and exports comprised thirty percent of our nation's gross domestic product (GDP), as our total trade reached five trillion dollars. These numbers highlight the importance of trade to our economy and emphasize how we rely on our infrastructure, and, especially in this case, our seaports.

The millions of jobs supported by this commerce also offer a glimpse at how the economic activity supported and driven by our ports reaches far beyond their borders to our farms, manufacturing facilities, and businesses. Therefore, the inability to ship perishable products in a timely manner and to import manufacturing inputs is devastating to communities across the country. As these negotiations continue, the U.S. agriculture industry suffers as our specialty crop producers are facing lost export sales and increased costs for cold storage, and the U.S. meat and poultry industry estimates losing at least $40 million each week. This will have a long-term impact as well, as our farmers lose market share.

We were pleased to see that your organizations jointly requested the assistance of a federal mediator, and we had hoped this would help facilitate a resolution. However, we are becoming increasingly concerned the negotiations are not progressing and a shutdown is possible, which our trade-dependent communities, and nation cannot withstand. According to recent studies, the ten day West Coast port shutdown that occurred in 2002 cost the economy over $15 billion. A study by the National Retail Federation and National Association of Manufacturers suggests a current day shutdown would be worse – over $21 billion for ten days and impacting 169,000 jobs. Moreover, even if a resolution is reached quickly, our constituents will endure months of attempting to clear the backlog at the ports and some business may never be recovered.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

We again urge you to come to a swift resolution for our workers, ports, communities, manufacturers and farmers.

Sincerely,

DAVE REICHERT
Member of Congress

KURT SCHRADER
Member of Congress

DAN NEWHOUSE
Member of Congress

CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS
Member of Congress

JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER
Member of Congress

MIKE SIMPSON
Member of Congress

GREG WALDEN
Member of Congress

JIM COSTA
Member of Congress

MIKE CONAWAY
Member of Congress

STEVE WOMACK
Member of Congress

MAC THORNBERRY
Member of Congress

ROB WOODALL
Member of Congress

AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN
Member of Congress

TIM WALBERG
Member of Congress

DAVID ROUZER
Member of Congress

PATRICK MCHENRY
Member of Congress

TOM EMMER
Member of Congress

KRISTI NOEM
Member of Congress

AARON SCHOCK
Member of Congress

ANDY BARR
Member of Congress

KEVIN CRAMER
Member of Congress

SAM GRAVES
Member of Congress

CHARLES W. DENT
Member of Congress

TIM HUELSKAMP
Member of Congress

BILLY LONG
Member of Congress

TODD YOUNG
Member of Congress

KEVIN MCCARTHY
Member of Congress

JERRY MCNERNEY
Member of Congress

RANDY HULTGREN
Member of Congress

GEORGE HOLDING
Member of Congress

EARL L. 'BUDDY' CARTER
Member of Congress

ROBERT ADERHOLT
Member of Congress

PETE SESSIONS
Member of Congress

TOM ROONEY
Member of Congress

KEVIN YODER
Member of Congress

ED ROYCE
Member of Congress

RANDY NEUGEBAUER
Member of Congress

STEPHEN FINCHER
Member of Congress

TED YOHO
Member of Congress

MIKE BOST
Member of Congress

JEFF DENHAM
Member of Congress

KENNY MARCHANT
Member of Congress

MIKE KELLY
Member of Congress

ROB BISHOP
Member of Congress

DANA ROHRABACHER
Member of Congress

DEVIN NUNES
Member of Congress

KEN BUCK
Member of Congress

MIKE COFFMAN
Member of Congress

RENEE ELLMERS
Member of Congress

REID RIBBLE
Member of Congress

RICHARD HUDSON
Member of Congress

BILL HUIZENGA
Member of Congress

MARK MEADOWS
Member of Congress

ANDY HARRIS
Member of Congress

ADRIAN SMITH
Member of Congress

LYNN JENKINS
Member of Congress

MARK AMODEI
Member of Congress

JASON SMITH
Member of Congress

STEVE KING
Member of Congress

DOUG LAMALFA
Member of Congress

TOM REED
Member of Congress

VICKY HARTZLER
Member of Congress

DAN BENISHEK
Member of Congress

PETER ROSKAM
Member of Congress

RICKY CRAWFORD
Member of Congress

LARRY BUCSHON
Member of Congress

RODNEY DAVIS
Member of Congress

FRED UPTON
Member of Congress

FRANK LUCAS
Member of Congress

COLLIN PETERSON
Member of Congress

MIKE ROGERS
Member of Congress

KEN CALVERT
Member of Congress

RAUL LABRADOR
Member of Congress

JACKIE WALORSKI
Member of Congress

PAT TIBERI
Member of Congress

SAM FARR
Member of Congress

MADELEINE BORDALLO
Member of Congress

FRENCH HILL
Member of Congress

DAVID G VALADAO
Member of Congress

BRUCE WESTERMAN
Member of Congress

ERIK PAULSEN
Member of Congress

HENRY CUELLAR
Member of Congress

MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress

STEVE STIVERS
Members of Congress