

December 19, 2024

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Our members represent a broad collection of the agricultural and food supply chains that faced severe shipping disruptions due to the East and Gulf Coast port strike that lasted from October 1 through October 3, 2024. While the strike duration was only 3 days, the impact was felt for a much longer period. Approximately a week in advance of the strike, most U.S. agricultural container shipments to the ports were embargoed to help prevent a backlog and it took weeks after the strike for container flows to return to normal.

We urge you to encourage the International Longshoremen's Association and the United States Maritime Alliance to commit to negotiating a new contract and coming to a resolution well in advance of January 15, 2025. Approximately 40 percent of U.S. containerized agricultural exports move through East and Gulf Coast ports, and foreign buyers are not captive to our exports. In the event of a disruption, other countries will seize the opportunity to capture this business.

For U.S. agricultural and food products to flow to domestic and international markets smoothly and to remain competitive, it is essential for all parts of the supply line to be functioning. A forthcoming shutdown of East and Gulf Coasts ports is a significant threat to the U.S. agriculture sector, and the businesses, workers, and communities who support trade in U.S. agricultural products. In fact, the American Farm Bureau Federation estimates that \$1.4 billion a week in ag trade is at risk if there is a strike or slowdown.

We thank you for your responsiveness to this imminent threat to our country's supply chains.

Sincerely,

Agricultural and Food Transporters Conference
Agricultural Retailers Association
Agriculture Transportation Coalition. AgTC
Amcot
American Beverage Association
American Chemistry Council
American Cotton Shippers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
AmericanHort

American Malting Barley Association
American Soybean Association
Consumer Brands Association
Corn Refiners Association
Cotton Growers Warehouse Association
Council of Producers & Distributors of Agrotechnology
Growth Energy
International Dairy Foods Association
International Fresh Produce Association
Juice Products Association
Meat Institute
National Aquaculture Association
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grain and Feed Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Pecan Federation
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
National Turkey Federation
North American Millers' Association
North American Renderers Association
Peanut and Tree Nut Processors Association
Pet Food Institute
Shippers Coalition
SNAC International
Soy Transportation Coalition
Specialty Soya Grains Alliance
The Association for Dressings & Sauces
The Fertilizer Institute
U.S. Apple Association
USA Rice
U.S. Dairy Export Council
US Dry Bean Council
U.S. Grains Council
U.S. Meat Export Federation
U.S. Peanut Federation
US Rice Producers Association
Western Growers

CC:

The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary, Department of Agriculture

The Honorable Julie Su, Acting Secretary, Department of Labor

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary, Department of Transportation