

November 17, 2015

The Honorable John Thune
Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science & Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science & Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment &
Public Works
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment &
Public Works
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation &
Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation &
Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Thune, Inhofe, and Shuster and Ranking Members Nelson, Boxer and DeFazio:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing manufacturers, farmers and agribusinesses, wholesalers, retailers, importers, exporters, distributors, transportation and logistics providers, and other supply chain stakeholders, we urge support for the “*Port Performance Act*” as included in the Senate passed version of the “*DRIVE Act*” (H.R. 22). This provision will help to gain empirical visibility into the operating efficiency of US ports, and help to identify key congestion issues that affect the flow of our nation’s commerce. **As a conferee, we urge you to support the provision in conference.**

Thousands of US businesses employing millions of American workers depend on global supply chains for the efficient movement of food, manufactured products, and components to production. Unfortunately, congestion at US ports has become commonplace, creating slowdowns, bottlenecks, and chokepoints that impact the efficient flow of cargo with far-reaching impacts on the US economy. For instance, a July, 2015 report from the Federal Reserve estimated slowdowns at West Coast ports were an important contributor to the .2% decline in US GDP during the first quarter of 2015.

And yet, despite the clear, demonstrated importance of US ports to American economic activity, there are, today, no consistent or objective efforts to measure port performance within the Department of Transportation, even though the Department regularly measures congestion affecting other nodes on the US transportation system. The Port Performance Act provisions included in HR 22 would remedy this situation, by calling for the development of a set of agreed-upon metrics, and the annual reporting of port statistics.

Collecting basic, uniform port performance data is an essential step in ensuring that we are ready to meet and solve future challenges facing our ports. While we recognize that every port is different, the exercise of defining a set of common performance metrics will go a long way toward helping policymakers, port administrators, and American exporters and importers understand the dynamics that create congestion, thereby enabling them to work together to find solutions that will benefit the US economy. Developing agreed-upon performance measures would not jeopardize safety; indeed, studying congestion is likely to provide solutions that will create safer working environments.

We stand ready to work with you in support of this provision within the DRIVE Act.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association
Agriculture Transportation Coalition
Airforwarders Association
Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers
Almond Hullers & Processors Association
American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA)
American Coatings Association, Inc.
American Cotton Shippers Association
American Chemistry Council
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Frozen Food Institute
American Import Shippers Association
American Potato Trade Alliance
American Pyrotechnics Association
American Soybean Association
American Trucking Associations
Association of American Railroads
Association of California Egg Farmers
Association of Food Industries
Auto Care Association
BizFed - LA County Business Federation
California Alfalfa & Forage Association
California Bean Shippers Association
California Business Properties Association
California Chamber of Commerce
California Farm Bureau
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Grain and Feed Association
California League of Food Processors
California Retailers Association
California Seed Association
California Trucking Associations
California Walnut Commission
California Warehouse Association
Chicago Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association
Columbia River Customs Brokers & Forwarders Association

Consumer Technology Association (formally Consumer Electronics Association)
Corn Refiners Association
Craft & Hobby Association (CHA)
Customs Brokers & International Freight Forwarders of Washington State
Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of Northern California
Fashion Accessories Shippers Association (FASA)
Footwear Distributors & Retailers of America (FDRA)
Foreign Trade Association
Forest Resources Association
Gamma Industry Processing Alliance (GIPA)
Gemini Shippers Association
Global Automakers
Global Cold Chain Alliance
Grain and Feed Association of Illinois
Grocery Manufacturers Association
Halloween Industry Association (HIA)
Harbor Trucking Association
Institute of Makers of Explosives
Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. (ISRI)
Intermodal Motor Carriers Conference
International Association of Movers (IAM)
International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses
International Refrigerated Transportation Association
International Source Suppliers and Producers Association (ISSPA)
International Warehouse and Logistics Association
International Wood Products Association
Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association (JPMA)
Los Angeles Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association
Meat Import Council of America
Midwest Shippers Association
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association
National Association of Chemical Distributors
National Association of Egg Farmers
National Association of Manufacturers
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Chicken Council
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Customs Brokers and Forwarders of America Association
National Fisheries Institute
National Grain and Feed Association
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Onion Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
National Retail Federation
National Shippers Strategic Transportation Council (NASSTRAC)
National Waste & Recycling Association

National Wooden Pallet & Container Association
New Jersey Motor Truck Association
New Jersey Retail Merchants Association
North American Home Furnishings Association
North American Meat Institute
North American Shippers Association, Inc.
Northwest Food Processors Association
Northwest Horticultural Council
NY/NJ Foreign Freight Forwarders and Brokers Assn
Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI)
Pacific Coast Council of Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association
Pacific Egg and Poultry Association
Pacific Northwest Asia Shippers Association
Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association
Promotional Products Association International (PPAI)
Retail Council of New York State
Retail Industry Leaders Association
San Diego Customs Brokers Association
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
Sports & Fitness Industry Association
The Fertilizer Institute
The Green Coffee Association
The Hardwood Federation
The National Industrial Transportation League
Toy Industry Association
Travel Goods Association (TGA)
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Fashion Industry Association
U.S. Forage Export Council
United Fresh Produce Association
United States Hide, Skin and Leather Association
US Dry Bean Council
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
Washington Council for International Trade
Washington Farm Bureau
Washington Retail Association
Washington State Hay Growers Association
Washington State Potato Commission
Waterfront Coalition
Western Growers

CC: House and Senate Surface Transportation Reauthorization Conferees