

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