



U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Suzanne P. Clark
President and
Chief Executive Officer

September 30, 2024

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We call upon you to intervene in the contract negotiations between the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and the U.S. Maritime Alliance (USMX) by invoking Taft-Hartley to avoid an expected work stoppage at 14 ports from Maine to Texas beginning on Tuesday, October 1, 2024.

Americans experienced the pain of delays and shortages of goods during the pandemic-era supply chain backlogs in 2021. It would be unconscionable to allow a contract dispute to inflict such a shock to our economy. These ports collectively handle more than 68% of all containerized exports and 56% of imports for the nation, with a daily trade value exceeding \$2.1 billion. They are also critical to many small businesses including trucking, restaurants, and others that rely on these ports for their livelihood. Simply put, you have the authority to keep contract negotiations going while keeping the ports open.

Taft-Hartley would provide time for both parties in negotiation to reach a deal on a new labor contract. Significant differences remain between USMX and ILA on a new contract that cannot be resolved before the current one expires today. Previous contract negotiations at our nation's ports saw both parties commit to no interruption in pay or service when a contract expired, yet the ILA walked away from the negotiating table with USMX on Monday, June 10, and has already communicated its intent to strike tomorrow, Tuesday, October 1. Good faith is critical to successful negotiations.

We understand labor negotiations are complex but we urge you to protect our economy by invoking Taft-Hartley and avoiding a work stoppage.

Sincerely,