

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 24, 2022

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President

As we pass the holidays, we want to continue to alert you to the ongoing supply chain constraints, particularly in moving goods through Western U.S. port that have reached critical status in the United States. While we disagree that there was no crisis relating to import distributions, the export disruptions continue and have serious consequences on U.S. farmers' ability to fairly compete in global markets.

Currently, while ocean carriers coming from Asia are imported into the U.S. at full capacity, those same carriers are all too often declining to take U.S. agriculture commodity exports. Foreign-owned carrier lines are returning empty containers for a quick turnaround towards more lucrative Asian imports. A record 70 percent of containers leaving California ports are leaving empty. For those foreign-owned carriers willing to haul U.S. goods across the Pacific, there are reports of unprecedented freight, storage, and demurrage fees being assessed on U.S. exporters.

Congress continues to push for reforms like the House-passed Ocean Shipping Reform Act (H.R. 4996) of 2021. However, given the critical nature of this threat to the U.S. reputation as a reliable exporter, we urge you to further use your emergency powers to address this supply chain crisis and mitigate the risks to agriculture in the United States. This includes steps to address cargo ships leaving our U.S. ports with empty containers while U.S. goods waiting for export are rejected, as well as transportation-related issues that are further exacerbating the situation.

Specifically, we request the following steps:

- **Utilize available emergency authorities to temporarily incentivize the outbound shipment of full containers**
 - Directing ports to provide trade-compliant priority access for carriers that commit to leaving U.S. ports with increased loads of full export containers, which would help to clear the backlog of export products on an interim basis until Congress completes longer-term legislation to provide a more fulsome solution.
- **Utilize any emergency actions that allow gross vehicle weight limits to exceed 80,000 pounds, even if only on a temporary basis**
 - For instance, current law allows states to issue permits to overweight vehicles following a federal emergency declaration under the Stafford Act, provided that those permits align with state law and are issued to vehicles exclusively delivering relief supplies.

- **Utilize any available tools or authorities to provide immediate access to critical shipping and logistics equipment**
 - Consider ways of augmenting the limited availability of shipping and logistics equipment, such as containers and chassis.

In addition to the above immediate-term items, we encourage you to examine additional near-term steps your Administration can also take to drive relief for our agricultural exporters. This supply chain crisis is already having disastrous consequences for the U.S. agriculture industry, and any delay in addressing key areas of congestion will only exacerbate the long-term ramifications. It is critical to act quickly to address these issues.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

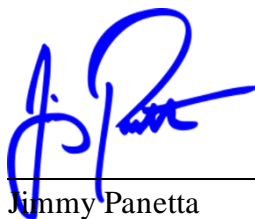
Sincerely,



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Dusty Johnson
Member of Congress



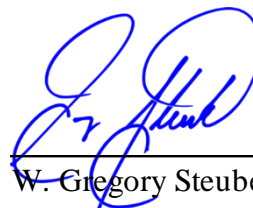
Jimmy Panetta
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David G. Valadao
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress



W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress



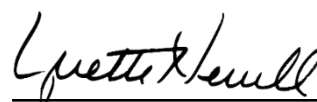
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Josh Harder
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Ed Case
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Yvette Herrell
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Elise M. Stefanik
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Tom O'Halleran
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John Garamendi
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Kat Cammack
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Kim Schrier, M.D.
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Darren Soto
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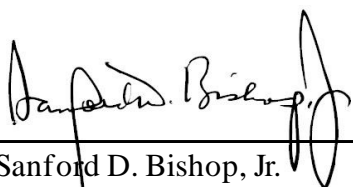
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



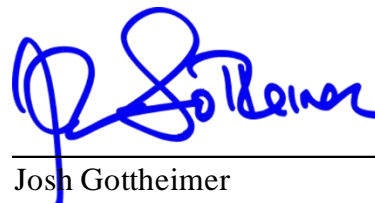
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Fred Keller
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Sharice L. Davids
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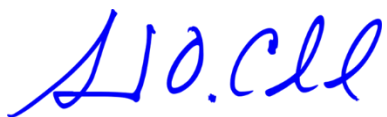
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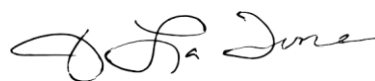
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Jake LaTurner
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Chris Jacobs
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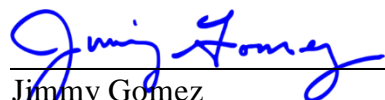
Peter Welch
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Glenn "G.T." Thompson
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Henry Cuellar
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Glenn Grothman
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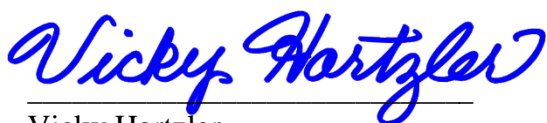
David Kustoff
Member of Congress



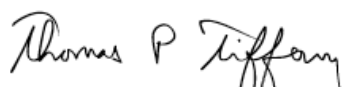
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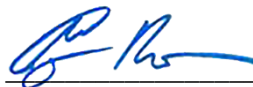
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Guy Reschenthaler
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