

Representative John Garamendi
Representative Dusty Johnson
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Congressmen Garamendi and Johnson;

The US agriculture and forest products industry strongly endorses your legislation, the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2021. The undersigned companies and associations believe the Act's provisions addressing unreasonable detention and demurrage charges, export cargo bookings, and other carrier practices, are essential to allow US agriculture to remain competitive in global markets.

The transportation crisis for US agriculture and forest products is becoming increasingly dire each month. There is nothing we produce in agriculture and forest products in this country, that cannot be sourced in some other country. If we cannot deliver, affordably and dependably, our foreign customers will find alternatives to our exports. Our survey suggests that on average 22% of US agriculture foreign sales cannot be completed due to ocean carrier rates, declining to carry export cargo, unreasonable demurrage and detention charges, and other practices.

Over 150 Members of Congress have written urging prompt Federal initiative. The House Transportation and Infrastructure hearing, President Biden's Executive Order, Secretary of US Dept of Transportation Buttigieg's Roundtable confirm that current law and regulation are insufficient to protect the ocean shipping interests of US exporters and importers.

We strongly support provisions in your bill to gain reasonable and fair ocean carrier practices consistent with the FMC's excellent Interpretive Rule on Demurrage and Detention – which unfortunately has gone unheeded for over two years. It imposes upon carriers the obligation to self-police compliance with that Rule. In addition, the bill obligates ocean carriers to carry export cargo, to the extent they can do so safely. It addresses carrier practices limiting efficient use of containers, chassis and other equipment.

We greatly appreciate your engagement with the agriculture community nationwide, to develop this proposed Act. As it proceeds through the legislative process, we look forward to working with you to advance and strengthen the bill.

Sincerely,

Agriculture Transportation Coalition

(All companies and associations will be listed here in alphabetical order.)