

July 23, 2020

The Honorable Steven Mnuchin
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

The Honorable Mark Meadows
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 2050

Dear Secretary Mnuchin and Mr. Meadows,

As you work with Congress to develop the next COVID-19 relief package, the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) and a nationwide coalition of ports urge the Trump Administration to request that Congress include emergency relief funding for ports in this next round of legislation. It is critical that the Trump Administration and Congress take immediate steps to ensure that our Nation's ports have the resources necessary to address the unique and unexpected challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our ports have kept vital goods moving to medical professionals and first responders, have ensured that our Nation's shelves remain stocked, and have enabled commerce to continue flowing during these uncertain times. U.S. coastal port total economic value generated in terms of revenue to businesses, personal income, and economic output accounts for \$5.4 trillion, roughly 26% of GDP. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, over 650,000 Americans were directly employed in jobs generated through the movement of marine cargo and through vessel activity, while 30.8 million total jobs were supported by cargo moving through America's deep-draft ports.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 crisis has had an extremely negative impact on ports. We have experienced significant operating losses as commercial cargo has plummeted and passenger movements in our ports have virtually ceased. At the same time, our expenses have greatly increased due to COVID-19 protocols and precautions that we have implemented nationwide. Furloughs and layoffs have begun in the maritime industry and across the supply chain. Based upon a recent study, this pandemic could result in a direct loss of 130,000 jobs at coastal ports. To date, no funding has been provided in any of the COVID-19 legislation to assist ports and the maritime transportation system, despite emergency relief being provided to other modes of transportation.

As you consider additional actions to respond to the ongoing pandemic, we ask that you request Congress to provide \$1.5 billion for ports to cover the following business-critical expenses that ports have incurred due to COVID-19: emergency response, cleaning, staffing, workforce retention, paid leave, procurement of protective health equipment, debt service payments, and lost revenue from other related maritime transportation system operations. Reimbursement of these expenses would be authorized in the recently-introduced Maritime Transportation System Emergency Relief Act (H.R. 7515) that would allow the U.S. Maritime Administration to provide grants to cover these sorts of emergency operating expenses for ports.

Additionally, we would urge your support of an amendment to the CARES Act as part of this next COVID-19 relief package to broaden the authority of governors to provide CARES Act funds that were appropriated in that Act directly to ports in their respective states. The CARES Act does not provide express authority for governors to provide these funds to ports, and it would be significantly helpful to ports if this oversight could be addressed.

It is essential that U.S. ports maintain a state of readiness and sustain our critical responsibility in the supply chains that provide food, medical equipment, and other essential goods for the citizens of this country. Without assistance from the Trump Administration and Congress to address our pressing needs, we fear that ports will not be able to continue operations at the high level that Americans have come to depend on. We hope that you will urge Congress to provide critical emergency relief to ports in the next COVID-19 relief bill.

We are available at any time to speak with you or your staff should you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



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CEO
American Association of Port
Authorities



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Executive Director
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South Jersey Port Corporation

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CEO
Toledo-Lucas County Port
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Rory J. Respecio
General Manager
Port Authority of Guam

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The Honorable Nancy
Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington DC
20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader H-
204, The Capitol
Washington, DC
20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Republican Leader McCarthy,

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July 23, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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