January 31, 2018

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan  The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker       Democratic Leader
House of Representatives House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol       H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515       Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bill Shuster  The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman       Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2251 Rayburn House Office Building 2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515       Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Chairman Shuster, and Ranking Member DeFazio:

As Congress and the Administration consider options to invest in our country’s infrastructure, we urge you to consider the unique multimodal and waterside needs of America’s ports in this discussion.

Our national supply chain begins at ports. Therefore, we hope any infrastructure package will include the necessary funding for our nation’s seaports. It is paramount that we provide our ports with the resources they need to both maintain and improve their infrastructure and the national freight network.

In recent years, Congress has shown its willingness to support port-related infrastructure projects. In 2015, the FAST Act was signed into law, which included dedicated programs for freight infrastructure projects and asked states to develop freight plans. In addition, the WRRDA bill of 2014 put us on a path for full use of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) resources. While these laws represent major steps forward, they alone will not modernize our multimodal goods-movement network. Of the $11 billion authorized in the FAST Act for freight investment, only $1.13 billion is eligible for multimodal projects needed at ports. This amount has dwindled to $275 million after several rounds of FASTLane and INFRA grants. Ports need a multimodal funding source to sustain investments in our critical freight infrastructure.

The American Association of Port Authorities has identified $66 billion in infrastructure needs for federal investment at our seaports to improve the flow of cargo as it heads to its final destination. These investments, both on land and in the water, will help alleviate congestion in crowded metropolitan areas, hasten the adoption of low or zero-emissions freight technology, and make U.S. seaports more competitive. Multimodal infrastructure funding for seaports and freight gateways, as well as full use of the HMTF with provisions to ensure donor equity will build upon our ports’ successful efforts to maximize the impact of federal infrastructure funds with state, local, and private-sector resources.
Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to reach out to us to discuss infrastructure needs at United States ports.

Sincerely,

Alan S. Lowenthal
Co-Chair, PORTS Caucus

Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

Brian Babin
Member of Congress

Jack Bergman
Member of Congress

Denny Heck
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

Ted Poe
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A. Donald McEachin
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Scott Taylor
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Cedric L. Richmond
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Julia Brownley
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Bruce Poliquin
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Nanette Diaz Barragan
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Jared Huffman
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Mark Takano
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Carol Shea-Porter
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Randy Weber
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Norma J. Torres
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Robert J. Wittman
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Jerry Nadler
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John Culberson
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress