



Harold Daggett
President

INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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July 7, 2022

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

**RE: Response to Letter by Federal Maritime
Commissioner Louis E. Sola Concerning Pending Labor
Dispute before the National Labor Relations Board**

Dear President Biden:

As you know, I am President of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), which represents approximately 65,000 longshore and other maritime workers in Atlantic and Gulf ports from Maine to Texas, as well as the Great Lakes, inland river ports, Puerto Rico, and eastern Canada. I write to respond to Federal Maritime Commissioner Louis E. Sola's disparaging comments about the ILA in his June 23, 2022 letter to you.

Although Commissioner Sola's letter tries to masquerade as an earnest attempt to restore the nation's supply chain and lament carbon emissions from ocean carriers queued off the coast of Charleston, South Carolina, a cursory review of the letter's language reveals it to be an unwarranted attack on the working women and men represented by the ILA in the port of Charleston and, indeed, the entire East Coast.

Commissioner Sola stated as follows:

I am shocked that this much-needed [Hugh K. Leatherman] terminal is laying fallow during this time of crisis due to an organized labor dispute in a right to work state. Growing up in a union household, I am one who would generally be considered pro-labor. Nevertheless, the thought that a labor dispute would contribute to this nation's current supply chain problem defies logic. Blocking the utilization of this terminal contributes to the delay in the import and export of needed commodities and contributes to the general level of Co2 emissions as ships loiter at sea awaiting an opening at the pier.

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It should be obvious to even the most casual of observers that the opening of this terminal is essential. Every asset at our disposal should be utilized in this effort.

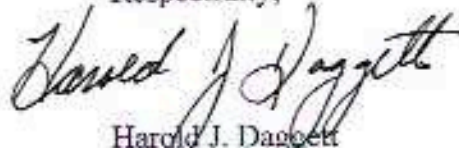
Commissioner Sola's letter relies on anti-labor and anti-union rhetoric in order to imply that the ILA and its workers are somehow "[b]locking the utilization of this terminal." In reality, ILA-represented workers continue to work hard every day in order to move cargo expeditiously through the port of Charleston. There have been absolutely no slowdowns or job actions at Leatherman Terminal or anywhere else in the port of Charleston.

Commissioner Sola's purported supply chain and environmental concerns ring hollow in light of the fact that the backlog of approximately 30 container vessels waiting off the coast of Charleston in February 2022 was recently cut to nearly zero. Likewise, Commissioner Sola's silence on the queue of ships idling off the coast of Los Angeles and Long Beach several months ago is even more deafening.

Although Commissioner Sola is correct that there is a matter currently pending before the National Labor Relations Board, his misunderstanding that the matter involves a right-to-work issue makes clear that federal labor law is not within the FMC's jurisdiction or competence. As such, his plea for Presidential intervention in that pending dispute at the NLRB is an example of overreach. Accordingly, I respectfully ask that you reject Commissioner Sola's request to intervene and allow the Board to render a decision in due course.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



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cc: The Honorable Martin J. Walsh, Secretary of Labor
All Commissioners, Federal Maritime Commission
Mr. Stephen Knott, Sec.-Treas., ILA
Mr. Dennis Daggett, Excc. Vice-Pres., ILA

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Mr. Wilbert Rowell, Gen. Vice-Pres., ILA
Mr. John D. Baker, Gen. Org., ILA
Mr. James H. Paylor, Jr., Ass. Gen. Org., ILA
Mr. Alan Robb, Asst. Gen. Org., ILA
Mr. Benny Holland, Exec. Vice-Pres. Emer., ILA
Mr. Kenneth Riley, V.P., ILA
Mr. Ingo Esders, Leg. Dir., ILA
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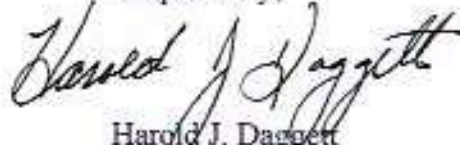
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