

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2023

The Honorable Daniel B. Maffei
Chairman
Federal Maritime Commission
800 North Capital Street, NW
Washington, DC 20573

Dear Chairman Maffei,

As members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, we are writing to urge the Federal Maritime Commission (“FMC” or “Commission”) to use its existing authority to establish a National Port Advisory Committee comprised of public port authorities, marine terminal operators (MTOs), and maritime labor. This would give ports, MTOs, and labor the same ability to advise the Commission on current and emerging issues as shippers were provided in the National Shippers Advisory Committee.

As you know, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee marked up H.R. 1836, the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2023, which includes a provision (Section 106) to require the Commission to establish a National Port Advisory Committee. The establishment of this committee would provide the maritime industry with the opportunity to share their concerns to the Commission regarding potential regulatory impacts on operations at America’s ports and marine terminals. This effort aims to safeguard the recent progress made in restoring the U.S. supply chain. We believe it would benefit the Commission, the industry, the consumer, and the waterfront worker to act now and create this advisory committee.

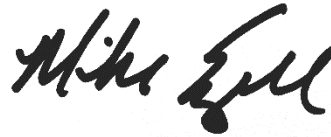
In standing up this committee, ports, terminal operators, and waterfront labor would be ensured fair representation before the Commission. Through that representation, they can provide valuable information, advice, and recommendations on policies related to the competitiveness, reliability, safety, and efficient movement of cargo at America’s waterfront. We are specifically supportive of the balanced composition that H.R. 1836 would afford the advisory committee, which would consist of five MTOs, five port authority, and three longshore and maritime labor representatives that would be appointed to the National Port Advisory Committee.

With America having only recently recovered from unprecedented supply chain congestion and inefficiencies that caused great harm to the U.S. economy, we believe that it is time to act and establish an advisory role for port and terminal stakeholders at the Commission. Doing so in short order would strengthen the resiliency of the marine freight transportation system, enhancing economic prosperity, improving the health and safety of the U.S. longshore and waterfront workers, and meeting the challenges of the future. Therefore, we urge the Commission to use its existing authorities to establish a National Port Advisory Committee.

Sincerely,



Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



Mike Ezell
Member of Congress