

May 27, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
1011 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
233 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) would like to voice its strong support for passage of the *Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015* (TPA-2015). We urge you to make passage of this legislation a priority, so the Administration can begin to finalize international trade agreements including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) both of which AAPA support.

The prosperity of the United States is inextricably entwined with that of the rest of the world and international trade agreements provide stability and equity enabling increased trade. AAPA believes this legislation will help open the door to new markets for American goods and services, boost U.S. economic growth and support well-paying jobs nationwide. Fair competition and equal market access within an open, multilateral trading system have been the cornerstone of U.S. international trade policy. AAPA favors reciprocal international trade liberalization on a fair and equitable basis, supports new trade legislation which is consistent with U.S. international obligations and has the effect of strengthening the President's ability to expand U.S. exports rather than creating new U.S. import restrictions, and supports efforts within the Congress and the Administration to emphasize the importance of foreign trade to the American economy and to structure the government's organization to bring maximum focus and efficiency to that effort.

Foreign trade is vital to the United States' economic well-being, and ports provide critical transportation infrastructure enabling our nation's exports and imports. Ports are gateways to our regional and national economies and connect American farmers, manufacturers and consumers to the world marketplace. A recently released study on U.S. port economic impacts, by Martin and Associates, showed that contributions of America's seaports to the nation's economy have risen dramatically due to increased trade, especially U.S. exports, which saw a 60 increase in value over the past seven years. From 2007 to 2014, the total economic value that U.S. coastal ports provided in terms of revenue to business, personal income and economic output by exporters and importers rose 43 percent to \$4.6 trillion.

This accounted for 26 percent of the nation's \$17.4 trillion economy in 2014, up from 20 percent of its \$16.1 trillion economy in 2007, and generated \$321 billion in tax revenues. Jobs created by port-related activity jumped 74 percent to 23.1 million.

With the U.S. population to increase another 42% by 2050 there will be greater demand for goods. Passage of the Trade Promotion Authority legislation will also allow us to access the ever growing global populations. Ports are ready to address the increased trade brought on by these trade agreements. We strongly urge you to make passage of the Trade Promotion Authority legislation a top priority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kurt J. Nagle", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kurt J. Nagle
President and CEO