

April 22, 2021

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo
United States Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

As the Chair and Vice Chair of the Department's Advisory Committee on Supply Chain Competitiveness (ACSCC), we are writing on behalf of our members to provide our Committee's recommendations on an urgent national economic topic. We ask that you share these recommendations with the President.

The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated our ports' crucial importance to America's economy, and that our Administration must prioritize action to quickly resolve port and supply chain disruptions to protect jobs and businesses throughout the United States.

Our ports of entry and their interconnected supply chains are America's most critical link to the global economy, allowing our businesses to compete globally while ensuring sufficient global product sourcing as needed. Any port event that slows cargo flow and supply chain movement – including labor shortages due to COVID infection – threatens our ability to keep industries in operation and hundreds of thousands of American workers employed.

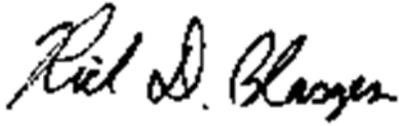
For this reason, it must be a top Administration priority to ensure that the front line workers that serve America's ports of entry are fully vaccinated against COVID. This workforce must include longshore labor, truck drivers, warehouse workers, and other essential personnel crucial to cargo movement.

As American companies quickly replenish their inventories to meet renewed consumer demand, cargo volumes are reaching record levels at our land, sea, and airports. This has resulted in unprecedented congestion in many ports, and has stretched their resources to the limit. Any surge of COVID infection in our port of entry workforce, either by the original virus or its rapidly spreading variants, could potentially cripple the flow of commerce moving out of or into the United States, and compound the severe delays and costs that this congestion is already imposing on our supply chains and consumers.

While each State is responsible for administering its COVID vaccination plans, it is essential that our Administration allocate sufficient vaccines and resources to each port of entry state to ensure that its port workforce is fully vaccinated against COVID. We also urge the Administration to quickly expand its partnerships and programs with these states to achieve this crucial goal.

We look forward to working closely with you on this and other national economic and competitiveness matters.

Respectfully submitted,



Rick D. Blasgen
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