



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

November 23, 2020

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Support for the Immediate Enactment of Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund Reforms

Dear Senator Feinstein:

Thank you for your longstanding leadership on advancing funding for port infrastructure, transportation networks and goods movement. We are grateful for your support of the full utilization of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF; the Fund) and taking the HMTF off-budget as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Final negotiations of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020 seem promising to include the framework put forward by the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) and strongly supported by the Port of Long Beach (the Port). Specifically, WRDA 2020 will include improved donor equity and expanded use of the HMTF to include slope stability and the maintenance and repair of existing rock dikes, concrete/steel bulkheads, pile, wharves, mooring dolphins and other marine structures, which all directly relate to the Port's ability to maintain navigation and berthing.

It is critical for the nation's ports that these reforms move forward swiftly. Any delay would jeopardize the ability of many U.S. ports to begin critical projects and would be particularly troubling in the current economic climate. To date, ports and the broader maritime sector have not received specific assistance from COVID-19 legislation. Immediately enacting HMTF reforms would provide a boost for ports and the jobs associated with these infrastructure projects. A delay in enacting the HMTF reforms would also allow Congress, in future WRDA legislation, to unravel the years of work it took to get both sides of the aisle to agree to the framework. Keeping the current allocations in place for an additional two years, while enacting full spend of the Fund, will further handicap the Port of Long Beach and other donor ports.

A robust and healthy port industry is vital to our nation, and donor ports play a key role in supporting national port infrastructure. The Port of Long Beach alone supports 2.6 million jobs throughout the United States and moves over seven and a half million twenty-foot equivalent units every year with cargo valued at \$170 billion. Seventy percent of imports coming into the Port of Long Beach are considered essential. The Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles move more than one-third of the nation's cargo and generate approximately 25% of the nation's Harbor Maintenance Tax revenues. Given the important role donor ports play in our national economy, equitable distribution of the Fund should not be delayed any further.

As Mayor of one of America's major port cities and Chair of the Ports and Exports Task Force for the US Conference of Mayors, I want to thank you for your leadership in the ports and supply chain industry. Now, more than ever, as we are faced with trying economic times, and the HMTF program needs to be modernized to include the equitable distribution of HMTF revenues and the expanded use of the funds toward important maintenance needs that will help sustain and grow our nation's ports. I look forward to continuing working with you and your staff in finalizing the WRDA legislation. If we may be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my Chief of Staff, Diana Tang at diana.tang@longbeach.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert Garcia", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

Cc: The Honorable Charles Schumer, Senate Minority Leader, United States Senate