

**International Longshoremen's Association, AFL-CIO and United States Maritime Alliance, Ltd.,
Call on Texas Lawmakers To Reject Legislation To Restrict Container Vessels In Port of Houston**

NORTH BERGEN, NJ – (Tuesday, April 30, 2019) Waterfront labor and management are joining forces to block potentially damaging legislation currently making its way through the Texas Legislature that would restrict container vessels exceeding 1,100 feet from calling on the Port of Houston more than once per week.

The leaders of the International Longshoremen's Association, AFL-CIO (ILA) and United States Maritime Alliance, Ltd., (USMX) said the proposed legislation, (House Bill 4445 and Senate Bill 2223), "will have a devastating impact on container services at the Port of Houston and the wider industry."

Harold J. Daggett, President of the ILA and David F. Adam, Chairman/CEO of USMX, cautioned that the Port of Houston's standing as the largest container port in the Gulf region and the fifth largest in the U.S. would be threatened if this legislation is enacted.

"The ILA and USMX last year negotiated a six-year Master Contract extension covering ports on the Eastern and Gulf Coasts that brings stability and the potential for growth. The Port of Houston stands to grow and prosper as a result, but this proposed legislation jeopardizes the port's future," said Mr. Daggett and Mr. Adam.

"Not only does it reverse this economic growth in the Port of Houston, it crushes it," they said.

At issue is how best to share the Houston Ship Channel between energy companies and shipping container vessels. A coalition of oil and gas companies, which also utilize the Houston Ship Channel, have gone to the Texas legislature to ask for passage of legislation to restrict large container vessels entering the Houston Ship Channel to one vessel per week due to the narrowness of the Channel.

"Reducing or virtually eliminating container ship calls at the Port of Houston would have crippling effects expanding well beyond the port itself," the ILA and USMX said. "The loss of good paying, ILA jobs; disruption to our national and international trade and commerce and loss of tax revenue to Houston and surrounding communities, just to name a few."

Major U.S. companies have invested in infrastructure to support the growth of container services into the Port of Houston. For example, in October 2018, one of the largest electronics retailers in the country opened a 550,000 square-foot facility distribution center in the Houston area and earlier, one of the largest big-box retailers also opened one of the largest industrial import and distribution facilities in the Houston Ship Channel area, providing 900 jobs with a payroll in excess of \$30 million annually.

"It makes no sense to limit the use of larger, more fuel-efficient vessels, from calling at the Port of Houston," the ILA and USMX said. "This proposed legislation would affect 30 percent of the fleet

vessels for most major ocean carriers and crush the economic engine of the critically-important Texas export trade.”

USMX represents employers of the East and Gulf Coast longshore industry. Membership consists of Container Carriers, including the largest carriers and carrier alliances worldwide, all major Marine Terminal Operators, and Port Associations representing each port on the East and Gulf Coasts. USMX’s members are responsible for the transportation and handling of cargo shipped to and from the United States.

The ILA represents 45,000 longshore workers at ports from Maine to Texas, Great Lakes region, Eastern Canada and Puerto Rico.

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