



News Release

Contact: Jon Kent @ (202) 223-6222
Richard Roche @ (315) 552-5480
Tom Mathers @ (202) 466-0222

For Immediate Release

NCBFAA Comments on Port Competitiveness to Department of Commerce

Washington, DC: In a [July 11 letter to the US Department of Commerce](#), National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America, Inc. (NCBFAA) Transportation Committee NVOCC Sub-Committee Chairman Richard J. Roche responded to the Department's request for public comment on U.S. seaport efficiency and competitiveness issues for its 21st Century U.S. Port Competitiveness Initiative.

Having attended numerous meetings and forums on the challenge of port congestion, Chairman Roche said, "You may not be surprised to hear that many of the themes are common from one meeting to the next just as much as they are common from one port to the next."

He noted that congestion is periodically wreaking havoc with our ports and needs to be addressed. "When we are free of congestion, we are really just between bouts of congestion," he said. "Time has proven that we are constantly in a delicate balance of all the factors necessary to keep ports running smoothly until such time as some outward force throws everything off, whereupon we quickly spiral downward."

In his comments, Chairman Roche itemized 20 current issues, e.g., larger vessels, lack of analytics, driver dissatisfaction, hours of service diminished by wait times, terminal hopping, chassis hoarding, among others; and offered 16 possible solutions, e.g., gate hour changes, better vessel planning and equipment staging, revolving labor shifts, appointment system pilot program, grey fleet for chassis shortage, greater use of RFID tag data, higher pay for drivers, among others.

In conclusion, Chairman Roche provided the Department with detailed responses to a list of eight questions designed to elicit information on challenges, best practices, funding, policy modernization, collaboration, enhancing port value, data use, and examples of best practices.

Headquartered in Washington, DC, the NCBFAA represents more than 1,000 member companies with 110,000 employees in international trade - the nation's leading freight forwarders, customs brokers, ocean transportation intermediaries (OTIs), NVOCCs and air cargo agents, serving more than 250,000 importers and exporters. Established in 1897 in New York, NCBFAA is the effective national voice of the industry. Through its various committees, counsel and representatives, the Association maintains a close watch over legislative and regulatory issues that affect its members. It keeps them informed of these and other related issues through its weekly Monday Morning eBriefing, and various meetings and conferences throughout the year.

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