



November 3, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
State Capitol, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Governor Newsom:

We, the undersigned Legislators, urge you to work with the Legislature on finding ways to address the supply chain crisis in an environmentally sustainable manner. While we believe that resolving the supply chain crisis is critical to the state's economic prosperity, we should reject the false dichotomy of choosing either economic growth or environmental protection.

The supply chain crisis is a local, state, national, and international issue. California alone did not cause it and it will take coordination at all of these levels to resolve this crisis. We ask that you coordinate with President Biden on addressing congestion problems at the ports and that we work with our federal partners to ensure that our solutions to congestion do not become problems for our air quality.

Recently, a coalition of business groups sent you a letter asking to suspend environmental and worker protections, some of which are still being implemented, in order to normalize the supply chain. They argued that low-income working families cannot afford to deal with the inflated prices of crucial goods caused by the port crisis. While we agree that focusing on working families should be what guides our actions, this misguided and harmful approach will not only fail to fix the supply chain crisis but will ultimately hurt the very families we are trying to protect.

The Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, are two of the busiest ports in the nation. In June, the Port of Los Angeles announced that it processed more than 10m container units over the previous 12-month period, the first port in the western hemisphere to do so. With all that movement comes a greater cost, increased emissions and criteria pollutants. The ports create more than 100 tons a day of smog and other cancer-causing contaminants. This has led to elevated rates of asthma and other public health hazards for communities that live near the ports and those that live near heavily trafficked corridors. These public health hazards have had a compounding effect during the pandemic as some Southern California communities also saw increased fatalities from COVID, with deaths up to 60% higher in heavily-polluted areas when compared to areas with better air.

While we also share the air quality concerns of idling ships on pollution-ridden communities, suspending environmental truck and warehouse regulations does not solve our underlying concern. They simply move the emissions idling at the port towards inland communities. All of our communities deserve access to clean air and not at the expense of each other. Picking winners and losers when it comes to environmental justice is a disservice to the people we are chosen to represent. Long after the

congestion problems at the ports are resolved, communities will continue to be impacted by the increased air pollution that resulted from the increased traffic. It is imperative that we maintain our commitment to our environmental and air quality goals. The health of our communities depends on it.

Ultimately, these calls to suspend environmental and labor regulations miss the mark as most issues related to port congestion can be traced back to the COVID-19 pandemic, when factory closures and employee layoffs slowed down production worldwide. The pandemic coupled with driver shortages in the trucking industry, (which predate many of the labor laws that industry is asking to suspend), and lack of available equipment is ultimately what is driving congestion. Rather than looking backward and backsliding on our environmental commitments, we should be looking forward with innovative solutions.

Executive Order N-19-21 exemplifies this innovative approach as it directly addresses the underlying issues. The Executive Order directs state agencies to find state, federal and private land for short-term container storage, directs California's Labor and Workforce Development Agency to identify potential high road training partnerships to increase job training opportunities for port workers, and directs agencies to coordinate with the Biden-Harris Administration Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force.

In addition to the actions your administration has already taken, we should work together during the next budget cycle to address the many underlying issues impacting port congestion. This may include driver shortages, transportation electrification, building out new clean infrastructure, and developing sustainable trucking routes, among other things.

It is clear that suspending our environmental progress will neither help resolve congestion at the ports nor is it in the best interest of working families. Instead we should be addressing existing issues in the supply chain and matching those problems with solutions from our next surplus. We look forward to working with your administration on developing sustainable innovative policies to address this crisis.


Sincerely,



Assembly Majority Leader Eloise Gomez Reyes  
47<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Assemblymember Isaac Bryan  
54<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Assemblymember Laura Friedman  
43<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District



Assemblymember Cristina Garcia  
58<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



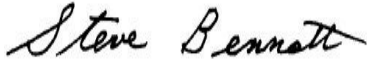
Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia  
56<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Assemblymember Luz Rivas  
39<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez  
80<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Assemblymember Steve Bennett  
37<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Assemblymember Marc Berman  
24<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Assemblymember Ash Kalra  
27<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Senator Connie Leyva  
20<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Senator Bob Wieckowski  
20<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Assemblymember Reggie Jones-Sawyer  
59<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Assemblymember Tasha Boerner-Horvath  
76<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Senator Maria Elena Durazo  
24<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Assemblymember Mark Stone  
29<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Senator Scott Wiener  
11<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Assemblymember Bill Quirk  
20<sup>th</sup> Assembly District