



September 13, 2006

***Make our Ports More Secure:
Support the Kerry Worker Training Amendment***

Dear Senator:

As the Senate works to complete debate on port security legislation, H.R. 4954, I urge your support for a bi-partisan amendment, led by Senator John Kerry, to ensure strong security training requirements for longshore and other port workers.

Properly preparing hundreds of thousands of port workers for the event of a terrorist threat or attack is a vital component of maritime security. Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on America, transportation labor has not relented in our pursuit of aggressive port security measures and specifically, strong, uniform worker training requirements.

Not only do the men and women who work in our ports every day deserve to be prepared, worker training is also a sound investment of security dollars. Front line workers can spot potential breaches, are the first on the scene in the event of an incident, are often called upon to help mitigate damage to facilities and equipment, and are among the first to report back to the port or terminal facility as post-incident operations resume.

Unfortunately, the version of the port security bill currently being debated on the Senate floor does not require the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to implement mandatory worker training, even though most port workers have received little or no information about how to respond to a security breach at our ports. There is no justification for leaving the training of front-line port employees to the discretion of the same agency that has refused to act in this area for the five years since 9/11. A port security bill failing to include mandatory security training requirements does not secure our ports from the risk of terrorist threats.

The Kerry amendment would require DHS to establish and implement a meaningful worker security training program, utilize the expertise of various training partners, as well as require terminal operators to establish a strategy and timeline for conducting training as an element of facility security plans.

We urge you to support the Kerry amendment. Port employees should not have to wait any longer to receive the security training they need and deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Wytkind', written over a circular scribble.

Edward Wytkind
President

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

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