

November 5, 2013

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Chris Christie
Governor of the State of New Jersey
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governors Cuomo and Christie:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) I urge you to take whatever actions necessary to prevent the Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor (Commission) from interfering in the implementation of the collective bargaining agreement between the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and the New York Shipping Association (NYSA). The Commission's refusal to allow terminal operators to hire needed employees is beyond the Commission's statutory authority and jeopardizes the economic competitiveness and efficiency of the NY-NJ Port.

As the transportation umbrella organization of the AFL-CIO, TTD has a vested interest in preserving the integrity of collective bargaining and ensuring the efficient movement of goods through our vast transportation network, including U.S. seaports. The actions taken by the Commission run counter to both of these principles. The NY-NJ Port handles over one-third of the cargo transported to the East Coast, benefitting 80 to 90 million consumers within 24 hours of the Port. In addition to the ILA, TTD represents a number of rail, maritime and other freight-related unions whose members depend on a fully functioning port for their own jobs and economic security.

Under the recent six-year collective bargaining agreement between the ILA and the NYSA, labor and management committed to a recruitment and hiring process to provide the NY-NJ Port with additional workers needed to handle increased volume of cargo and to ensure diversity in this workforce. Part of this effort also included a commitment from the parties to provide veterans with a hiring priority for these good middle-class jobs. Instead of allowing this agreement to work, the Commission has refused to approve an industry request to hire 532 longshoremen and 150 checkers and has embarked on a bureaucratic process designed to circumvent the collective bargaining agreement. Not only does this decision jeopardize these needed jobs, but it will have a severe impact on cargo flow and port operations.

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
The Honorable Chris Christie
November 5, 2013
Page 2

It is time for the political leadership of both New York and New Jersey to ensure that the Commission's activities are halted and the economic engine that is the NY-NJ Port can continue to grow and serve the freight needs of our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Wytkind', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Edward Wytkind
President