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***Waterfront Coalition Calls for Action to Address Congestion, Infrastructure Needs***  
*-- Coalition Policy Paper Outlines Steps for Public and Private Sectors--*

**[May 25, 2005 – Washington, DC]** – The Waterfront Coalition today released a comprehensive "white paper" on the Marine Container Transportation System in which it urged private industry and government to take immediate action to address congestion and infrastructure needs that could hamstring American commerce if not adequately addressed soon. The policy paper, entitled *The National Marine Container Transportation System: A Call to Action* was developed over the last four months by a group of American companies including American manufacturers, brand name suppliers, retailers, farmers, and transportation providers.

"It's fair to say that if America doesn't address the productivity and capacity of its marine terminals, railroads and highways, the country will be in for some pretty hard economic times. The fact is, in today's economy, the transportation of intermodal containers is the very lifeblood of international and national commerce," said Robin Lanier, executive director of the Waterfront Coalition. "These issues ought to be part of a National Goods Movement Policy. And today we're calling on the U.S. Department of Transportation to begin drafting such a policy," she said.

The Coalition has identified a number of key highway and rail projects that are essential to moving goods in America. Among the projects identified--improving the interchanges between Eastern and Western railroads in Chicago and New Orleans; improving rail capacity out of the Pacific Northwest and Southwest, and a listing of key intermodal "port connector" highway projects needed to address congestion specifically around the nation's seaports.

Because the problems facing goods movement in the United States are so complex, the Coalition has not limited its views to government policy, alone. "Through our work with shippers and stakeholders to address port congestion in Southern California that will soon give us PierPass, these

problems are only going to be resolved through a concerted and timely effort by all stakeholders in both the private and public sectors," said Lanier.

To this end, the Coalition is calling for significant changes in long-held business practices that include the way intermodal chassis are managed, the practice of providing "free time" for container storage at marine terminals, and vessels operations that affect congestion. The Coalition has also called for significant private sector and public sector steps to provide alternates to the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach for Asian trade. These steps include significant infrastructure improvements in Oakland, California, and support for all-water routes to the East Coast.

The Waterfront Coalition also called on elected officials at the federal and state level to eschew government regulations designed to impose "efficiency" on port terminals in the name of addressing congestion. Instead, the group has asked for federal attention to the infrastructure needs through expanded funding for goods-related highway projects, the provision of tax incentives for private investment in intermodal rail capacity, and assistance for short-haul truckers to enable them to improve the efficiency of their equipment.

A copy of the report is available on the Coalition's webpage at [www.portmod.org](http://www.portmod.org). A summary of the major findings and conclusions is available at the following link:  
<http://www.portmod.org/news/press/White%20Paper.htm>.

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*The Waterfront Coalition is a group of concerned business interests representing shippers (importers and exporters), transportation providers, and others in the transportation supply chain committed to educating policy makers and the public about the economic importance of U.S. ports and foreign trade, and to promote the most efficient and technologically advanced ports for the twenty-first century.*