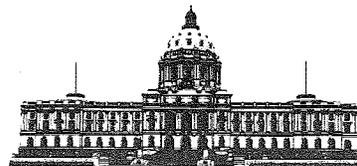


SENATOR JOE GIMSE
Transportation Policy & Finance Chair
Senate District 13
303 State Capitol Building
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
(651) 296-3826
sen.joe.gimse@senate.mn



Senate

State of Minnesota

December 21, 2011

Ms. Karen V. Gregory
Secretary
Federal Maritime Commission
800 North Capitol Street, NW
Washington, DC 20573-0001

Subject: Docket No. 11-19, *U.S. Containerized Cargo Flows – Response to NOI*

Dear Madam Secretary:

We write this letter to you jointly as the respective Chairs of the Minnesota Senate Transportation Committee and the Minnesota House Transportation Committee. We are submitting these comments in response to the Federal Maritime Commission's (FMC) Notice of Inquiry regarding U.S. Inland Containerized Cargo Moving Through Canadian and Mexican Seaports.

Canada and the United States share the world's largest and most important bilateral trade relationship in the world with 8 million U.S. jobs dependent on free and efficient trade with Canada. Businesses on both sides of the border depend on efficient supply chains to compete in the global economy. In addition, more than 157,000 jobs in Minnesota are dependent on that free and efficient trade. Trade between the United States and Canada, as well as the ability to choose from among a variety of North American ports or overall supply chains for imports and exports, are essential to the success of the businesses across Minnesota.

Measures that disrupt cross border transportation negatively impact U.S. importers and exporters, including those here in the border state of Minnesota, home of one of the largest cross border rail crossings in North America (Rainier, Minnesota). Bilateral merchandise trade in Minnesota is valued at \$13.9 billion. Minnesota sells more goods to Canada than any other country in the world and as both an importer and exporter we believe in maintaining a free, open border that facilitates free trade for both nations.

Therefore, we would respectfully request that any recommendations the Federal Maritime Commission makes on this matter takes into account all potential factors affecting a shipper's choice of port. This includes, but should not be limited to, international logistical strategy, freight charges, available port equipment, transit time considerations and shipping flexibility.



Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue. Please include this letter in the public docket for this proceeding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joe Gimse".

Senator Joe Gimse
Chair of the Minnesota Senate Transportation Committee

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mike Beard".

Representative Mike Beard
Chair of the Minnesota House Transportation Committee