

JAMES A. LEACH
SECOND DISTRICT, IOWA



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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
FEDERAL MARITIME COMM

September 11, 2003

Bryant L. VanBrakle
Secretary
Federal Maritime Commission
800 North Capitol Street, NW
Washington, DC 20573

RE: Petition P3-03

Dear Commissioners:

It is my understanding that you are currently considering the above referenced petition for an exemption to the prohibition on Non-Vessel Operating Common Carriers (NVOCCs) from entering into confidential contracts with their customers. It occurs to me that such a decision could have broad reaching effects on the ability of American NVOCCs to compete in foreign markets.

The state of the U.S. ocean shipping industry has changed dramatically since passage of Ocean Shipping Reform Act. There has been consolidation among ocean carriers resulting in a dramatic reduction in the number of major U.S. flagged carriers. Ocean carriers have created vertically integrated logistics companies that now compete with NVOCCs.

The petition currently under review cites the recent evolution of the ocean shipping marketplace. By granting this petition, you would level the playing field between NVOCCs and vessel operators, benefiting ocean shipping consumers around the world.

It is my hope that every appropriate consideration can be given to this request.

Sincerely,


James A. Leach
Member of Congress

OFFICES
2186 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BLDG.
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1501
(202) 225-6578
FAX (202) 226-1278

214 JEFFERSON STREET
BURLINGTON, IA 52601-5215
(319) 754-1106
FAX (319) 754-1107

129 12TH STREET, SE
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52403-4074
(319) 363-4773
FAX (319) 363-5008

125 SOUTH DUBUQUE STREET
IOWA CITY, IA 52240-4003
(319) 351-0789
FAX (319) 351-5789

105 EAST 3RD STREET
ROOM 201
OTTUMWA, IA 52501-2904
(641) 684-4024
FAX (641) 684-1843