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Statement by John McLaurin, President, Pacific Merchant Shipping Association

The Pacific Merchant Shipping Association (PMSA), whose members are ocean carriers and marine terminals, are encouraged by the actions of the Biden Administration to relieve congestion in the supply chain. This federal leadership has the potential to expedite needed shipments of goods throughout the United States.

To be clear, all parts of the supply chain are struggling under a surge in cargo. Marine terminal gates are open, and most are providing extended hours but are not being utilized. The problem is that trucks are not using the extended hours due to a shortage of drivers, warehouses are full and also suffer from a lack of personnel, chassis that carry containers are not being returned causing equipment shortages. It is a system of systems all dependent upon each other.

We applaud President Biden and his Administration for encouraging system-wide solutions that will allow the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) workers to continue their dedicated service. While many professions were working remotely, the ILWU and marine terminal staff continued to load and unload ships and process containers. Southern California ports have processed more containers in 2021 than at any point in their history.

Accomplishing that goal was not easy. PMSA members have taken several actions to address the congestion that resulted from the pandemic and the disruptions throughout the global manufacturing and goods movement supply chain. Ocean carriers have secured more vessels to meet the growing demand for goods from United States businesses and consumers, terminals and ocean carriers have obtained land outside of port areas to store containers. Despite all of the challenges due to COVID-19, ocean carriers have transported a record amount of goods to California ports. To date, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach have processed 30% more TEU's in 2021 than in 2020

We look forward to working with the Biden Administration to keep the supply chain moving.

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About the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association (PMSA). The Pacific Merchant Shipping Association (PMSA) is an independent, not-for-profit association focused on global trade. PMSA operates offices in Oakland, Long Beach and Seattle, and represents owners and operators of marine terminals and U.S. and foreign vessels operating throughout the world.