



Manufacturing, retail and agriculture groups are calling for a speedy ratification of the deal struck Friday night to end the [West Coast ports standoff](#). The congestion will take months to clean up, and the bad relationships developed with export markets might take even longer to heal, they say.

The Pacific Maritime Association and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union say they have reached a five-year agreement to end a bitter nine-month negotiation that resulted in massive slowdowns at the 29 West Coast ports. The news followed the White House's dispatching of Labor Secretary Thomas Perez to San Francisco on Tuesday to help broker the deal.

"Now, we urge both sides to ratify the deal as quickly as possible so that the backlog at the ports can be cleared, and normal operations can resume," said Juanita Duggan, the American Apparel & Footwear Association's president and CEO, in a statement issued late Friday night.

AAFA said the dispute and related delays have cost its members millions in lost sales, as nearly 50 percent of all clothing and shoes are imported through the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

"We know that even upon ratification, clearing up the congestion will take months," said Peter Friedmann, executive director of the Agriculture Transportation Coalition. "Perishables have been knocked out of markets, and our customers overseas have been forced to find other, non-U.S., sources for their meat, fruit, hay, cotton, rice, nuts, French fries, lumber and so much more," he said. "There is nothing that we produce in agriculture here in the U.S. that cannot be sourced elsewhere in the world. If we don't supply dependably and affordably, we lose that business."

The White House has released the following statement on the ILWU-PMA agreement. Please note the last line calling upon the parties to clear out the backlog as they ratify the agreement.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Statement by the Press Secretary on the West Coast Ports Agreement**

This is great news for the parties involved in the negotiation and a huge relief for our economy – particularly the countless American workers, farmers, and businesses that have been affected by the dispute and those facing even greater disruption and costs with further delays. Helping resolve this dispute has been a top priority, and last weekend the President directed Labor Secretary Tom Perez to travel to California to meet with the parties to help them reach a resolution because further delays would have been harmful to these workers and the economy. The President was kept updated on the negotiations over the past several weeks, including receiving an update last night from Secretary Perez. The President is grateful to Secretary Perez for his hard work bringing about a successful resolution to this dispute, and for the help of federal mediator Scot Beckenbaugh. And he calls on the parties to work together to clear out the backlogs and congestion in the West Coast Ports as they finalize their agreement.

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