

INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE & WAREHOUSE UNION



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MEMORANDUM

TO: ILWU Coast Longshore Division Locals
FROM: William E. Adams, International President
SUBJECT: **Industry Update**
DATE: March 13, 2020

I am reaching out to acknowledge the challenging times that we are in and to invoke the strength and humanity of the ILWU family as we navigate through this difficult period.

For the last year, we have been dealing with the harmful economic impact of President Trump's trade war with China. Now, we face a global health threat with the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). These two things combined are wreaking havoc on the supply chain and resulting in declining cargo volumes and cruise ship work at our ports. The result is a dramatic drop in work and financial hardship for longshore workers.

The drop in work and the volatility in world markets is concerning. However, I want to reassure our ILWU Coast Longshore Division Locals that the Coast Committee is monitoring the situation, our pension funding level remains healthy, and the health care benefits we have negotiated will provide the support needed should longshore workers and/or their family members need care for COVID-19.

As you know, in order to protect the health and safety of local delegates and committee members, and to support the effort to contain the COVID-19 outbreak and prevent sustained spread in this country, we have postponed the caucus and associated committee meetings. In addition, yesterday, the parties restricted industry travel coastwise in an effort to protect the rank and file. We did not take this action lightly and understand that it creates issues that will need to be addressed as we move forward. However, we all have a part to play to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Going forward, in order to ensure worker safety, we are working closely with PMA and maintaining close communication with the relevant federal, state, and local government agencies. This includes the United States Coast Guard, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, local port authorities, and city governments. We are also in daily communication with the ILWU Coast Longshore Division Locals in order to share information and address issues and concerns as they arise on the docks.

Things will likely get worse before they get better, but we will get through this. At this time, we must lean into the ILWU family for help and support and stay united.