



September 20, 2010

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the BlueGreen Alliance and our more than 9 million union and citizen members working together to build a clean energy economy, I write to ask for your support on H.R. 5967, the Clean Ports Act of 2010, introduced recently by Rep. Jerrold Nadler of New York. The Act currently has 75 co-sponsors.

Greening our ports and cleaning up our environment is not a burden that should fall on hard working truck drivers already suffering under low wages and deplorable working conditions. More than 100,000 U.S. port truck drivers toil every day in dirty diesel rigs and effectively earn less than federal or state minimum wages. Many are without health insurance, and are misclassified as independent contractors, making them exempt from almost all legal protections for employees, including the right to form a union.

At the same time, eighty-seven million Americans live and work near these ports in regions that violate federal air quality standards, resulting in much higher rates and risk of asthma, cancer, and respiratory illnesses.

I encourage you to support the ports across the country that are trying to address these problems. For example, before industry lobbyists took the Port of Los Angeles to court and gutted its U.S. EPA-award winning Clean Truck Program, 8,500 clean diesel and alternative fuel vehicles had been put in service, emissions had been reduced by 80 percent, and most drivers' wages were on the rise.

We have seen the obvious success of the L.A. Clean Truck Program, and this bill will help right a great injustice when that program was halted. A broad coalition of stakeholders has been and will continue to support efforts to clean up America's ports and make sure companies, not truck drivers, are the responsible parties to maintain, upgrade and update to cleaner, more fuel-efficient fleets. This legislation will allow programs in other states to finally move forward and become success stories in their own right.

The Clean Ports Act of 2010 would permit ports to implement these types of programs and allow trucking companies to purchase and maintain new, clean trucks, as well as hire their drivers as employees instead of misclassifying them as independent contractors.

We can help forge a path towards economic recovery by creating good, green jobs while also cleaning the air millions of Americans breathe.

Please become a cosponsor of the Clean Ports Act of 2010. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Foster". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

David Foster
Executive Director