

NEWS IN BRIEF

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ILA Cancels Contract Discussions Over Automation Dispute

The International Longshoreman's Association (ILA) has canceled current contract negotiations over the use of automation at certain terminals. The ILA has been working on contracts with the local unions before working to finalize the main coastwise contract for six years with the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX). This all stopped when the ILA complained about automated gate systems at some Maersk APM terminals and its leadership will not negotiate the new master contract until the issue is resolved. Maersk has contended that their automation projects do not violate the current master contract and has offered to resume negotiations to find a mutual resolution. The ILA will look at other automation projects and their impact on the terminals. The current coastwise contract expires on September 30, 2024, and these delays could lead to a work disruption. We will all be watching as this works out.

Miscellaneous Trade Bill Introduced in the House

A Miscellaneous Trade Bill (MTB) has been introduced in the House Ways and Means Committee. The MTB is a list of items and their HTS numbers that are not available from domestic producers and are granted duty-free status. Each must have an application for MTB status. The bill includes many items that were granted MTB status when MTB expired at the end of 2020. The bill includes retroactivity back to January 1, 2021. The Ways and Means subcommittee Chairman Adnan Smith expressed that he's hopeful that MTB could pass the house before the August recess.

CBP in Laredo Issues a Notice about Enforcement on Truck Manifests

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at the Port of Laredo has issued a Trade Notice pointing out errors on truck manifests such as failure to manifest all the cargo on a truck or forgetting to completely manifest a shipment that is on the truck. CBP will start issuing penalties for failure to properly manifest cargo on shipments coming in from Mexico. Attached is a link to the Trade Notice: [Falsify or lack of Manifest Penalties](#). We suggest that you share this notice with your vendors.

We have also seen some rare instances where some shippers are using services to transmit manifests that are not bonded. If an error is made, then CBP will issue a penalty to other parties in the transaction such as the importer. Please check with your sources that their manifest service provider is bonded to protect you from possible penalty actions.

Baltimore Shipping Channel Has Reopened

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that they have cleared the Fort McHenry Channel in the Port of Baltimore of the debris from the bridge collapse that had closed the port since March 26, 2024. While the channel is fully open, it will take a few weeks for the carriers to resume full service.



By **Todd Boice**, *President*