



December 10, 2024

The Honorable Daniel B. Maffei  
Chairman  
Federal Maritime Commission  
800 North Capitol Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20573

**Subject: Support for FMC Investigation into Spain's Denial of Entry to U.S. Flag Vessels**

Docket No. FMC-2024-0022

Dear Chairman Maffei:

On behalf of the undersigned maritime labor unions, we are writing to express our full support for the Federal Maritime Commission's (FMC) investigation in response to disturbing reports that the Government of Spain has denied entry to U.S. flag vessels at its ports. This unacceptable practice undermines the principles of fair trade and creates unfavorable conditions for U.S. shipping in foreign trade. We commend the Commission for its prompt action in addressing these serious concerns.

Recent reports indicate that Spanish ports have denied entry to three specific U.S. flag vessels, including the Maersk *Denver* and Maersk *Seletar*, both of which enrolled in the Maritime Security Program (MSP). These vessels are essential for maintaining the security and reliability of U.S. foreign trade and defense readiness. Such actions by the Spanish government jeopardize the free flow of commerce through the diversion of U.S. flag vessels while also disrupting shipping operations, in direct violation of international norms and agreements.

Maritime labor stands united in its commitment to support the mission of the United States, including the promotion of our nation's economic and national security interests by delivering timely cargo on behalf of the American people. We respectfully urge the FMC to utilize every tool at its disposal under the law to hold the Spanish government accountable and to compel an immediate reversal of this harmful policy. The actions taken by the Government of Spain not only disrupt U.S. maritime commerce but also set a dangerous precedent for the treatment of U.S. vessels in foreign ports. We trust that the FMC will act decisively to address these violations and protect the rights of U.S. flag vessels to operate freely in international trade.

Thank you for your continued leadership and steadfast commitment to the fair treatment of the U.S. merchant marine. We stand ready to support the Commission's efforts in any necessary way to resolve this matter.

Sincerely,

Willie Barrere, President, American Maritime Officers  
Mark Clements, President, Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO (MTD)  
Dave Connolly, President, Sailors' Union of the Pacific  
David Heindel, President, Seafarers International Union  
Don Marcus, President, International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots  
Anthony Poplawski, President, Marine Firemen's Union  
Greg Regan, President, Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD)  
Adam Vokac, President, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association