



October 9, 2002

Dear Senator,

Although the West Coast ports have reopened under the Taft-Hartley Act, the impasse between management and labor still has the potential to bring industries across the country, including the electronics manufacturing sector, to a point of crisis. At a time when many high-tech companies are struggling to recover from a rough financial period, the uncertainty over another shutdown of these important trade routes is disruptive and could have long-term negative ramifications for the broader economy. Jobs are at stake. Our country's economic stability is at stake.

I strongly urge you to support President Bush's stand on this situation and to encourage the immediate resumption of talks by all stakeholders. We must find an end to this problem as quickly as possible.

During the recent 10-day West Coast shutdown, Boeing Co., the world's largest commercial airplane manufacturer and a member of the Electronic Industries Alliance, was forced to stagger production and perform work out of sequence while it waited on components. Another port closure would have similar, if not more severe, consequences, and other high-tech companies – an integral part of the U.S. economy – are certain to experience adverse effects. Even with the ports reopened, it will take weeks to work through the backlog of goods waiting to enter the U.S. With companies tightly managing supply-chain operations to ensure just-in-time manufacturing and delivery, another component holdup could affect sales during the critical holiday period.

Senator Dianne Feinstein aptly expressed our sentiments last week when she said that we cannot afford to let this dispute cause further damage to our economy. The White House agrees, and we support President Bush's move Tuesday to implement a cooling-off period in hopes that those involved can reach an agreement. The estimated \$2 billion a day that a West Coast shutdown costs the U.S. economy is far too high a price to pay for this standoff.

We must get management and labor back to the bargaining table to find an acceptable compromise before the end of the cooling-off period. This is not about unions versus shippers; this is about American jobs and the survival of industries that help make this country strong. We would appreciate your help in supporting the President and in moving the parties towards the goal of successful negotiations.

Sincerely,



Dave McCurdy
President
Electronic Industries Alliance



Matt Flanigan
President
Telecommunications Industry Association