

Joint Trade Industry Statement Regarding a Potential Government Shut Down on October 1st, 2023

The undersigned trade groups write this joint statement to advocate for all avenues of international trade to remain open during the potential upcoming government shutdown. Both imports and exports are vital to our economic safety and security, homeland defense and international relations. We must work together to keep legitimate trade flowing and to keep illicit trade and bad actors out of the supply chain during this challenging time.

Specifically, the trade community requests:

- **Private Sector Access to the CBP 'War Room'** - We commend CBP for starting the planning process for a potential shut-down, and fully support the staffing of a 'war room' throughout any lapse in government funding. We urge CBP to work with the private sector trade community and grant the private sector direct access to the 'war room' to keep trade moving throughout any shutdown.
- **PGA Presence in the CBP 'War Room'** - We request CBP and our PGA's to have PGA staff fully integrated into the CBP 'war room', especially those agencies with hold authority and others, like EPA and CPSC, who must clear goods before they can enter the stream of commerce and TSA who is not a participant in ACE.
- **CBP HQ, Ports and Centers Must Coordinate** - We implore CBP to pre-plan coordination with the Centers of Excellence and Expertise and the local ports. During prior shutdowns the private sector trade community experienced breakdowns in communication between CBP HQ, the local ports and the CEEs that caused needless inefficiencies in moving trade.
- **CBP Daily Briefings with the Private Sector** - In past lapses of government funding, CBP did an incredible service to trade by holding daily briefings. We very much hope that CBP repeats that best practice so that any issues can be swiftly identified, and resolution can be found. We also strongly ask that all PGA's withhold authority attend this daily briefing as well. It will only be with all parties working together in a coordinated manner that trade will be able to continue to move during any potential lapse in government funding.
- **Trade Must Flow Both Ways** - The trade community emphasizes that trade must continue to move in both directions for the duration of any lapse in government funding. Exports, including licenses, inspections, impractical to screen cargo and the like, must be able to flow inbound as well as outbound across our borders during a shut down.
- **All Tangential Trade Functions Must be Considered Essential** - We beg of the government when deciding what employees are essential to consider tangential trade functions. Examples include the issuance of steel and aluminum licenses via the Department of Commerce, EPA inspection

sites, all PGA staff who conduct document reviews or technical staff to resolve automation issues, personnel who process the paper checks at the ports, personnel who conduct inspections for self-propelled used vehicle exports, and the like, be deemed essential so that trade can continue to move.

Sincerely,

National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America (NCBFAA)