

Call to Action!

Challenges such as global pandemics and other disruptions have strained supply chains, necessitating constant strategic planning. The current war in Ukraine will exacerbate these challenges.

There is one such immediate challenge for our exporters that we would like to bring to your attention to which you can help us with.

Imagine you are an exporter of value-added products and you require 20' shipping containers to ship your goods on an ocean carrier overseas. Those 20' containers arrive in the U.S. fully loaded. They are then unloaded and then shipped back to Asia empty because of the demand to return them as quickly as possible for return passage back to the U.S. This "empty return" policy by the ocean carriers (they are all foreign-owned) is driven by urgent product demand here in the U.S. The impact of this "empty return" policy is that various U.S. exporters are simply unable to get containers to ship their product in, creating unsustainable losses for our value-added manufacturers, including damage to the exporter's Asian customer base—not to mention the empty, wasted shelf space on the Asian side. Fortunately, there is a solution, but it needs from you.

The Ocean Shipping & Reform Act passed the House in December with broad bipartisan support. It has been introduced into the Senate but has not been assigned out to committee. The legislation can help fix many of the problems our exporters face at the ports, by strengthening the Federal Maritime Commission's enforcement mechanisms and overall toolkit. Among the important provisions of this legislation is that it will prohibit ocean carriers from unreasonably declining opportunities for U.S. exports, as determined by the Federal Maritime Commission in a new required rulemaking.

This is a critical time for DEC members to reach out to their Congressional Representatives and local staff and help us get this legislation in place to assist our exporters.

("More on the Bill" [Link here](#))