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Photos Available

Joined By Local Dockworkers, The Free Trade In Steel Coalition Announces Plans For Protecting American Jobs In Face Of Trade Restrictions

PHILADELPHIA, PA – The Free Trade in Steel Coalition, joined by local dockworkers, announced its plans for protecting American jobs in the face of trade restrictions, during a press conference held today at Penn’s Landing in Philadelphia.

The Free Trade in Steel Coalition represents nearly 40 major United States port authorities, port terminal operators, and other U.S. port and transportation industry organizations that are deeply concerned about possible loss of U.S. maritime related jobs resulting from the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) Section 201 global safeguard investigation. With the support of longshore labor here on the Delaware River, the FTSC expands its membership to include all facets of the maritime industry threatened by possible trade restrictions. “Having local labor in support of FTSC completely illustrates the collateral damage that trade restrictions would have on all the stakeholders in the maritime industry,” said Dennis Rochford, Coalition coordinator and President of the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay.

A November 2001 economic study performed by Martin and Associates shows that more than 38,000 direct, induced, and indirect jobs for U.S. residents in 2000 were dependent upon the handling of imported steel products. In addition, \$1.7 billion of direct business revenue provided to the port and inland transportation industry in 2000 for the handling and movement of imported steel products is at stake. *Locally, the economic impacts of imported iron and steel products to the region can be measured in terms of almost 4,500 jobs, \$175 million in personal income, \$300 million in business revenue and \$70 million in federal, state and local taxes.* “These are American jobs here on the Delaware,” said local labor leader John McCann. “It’s important the public know that local families are counting on us.” Uwe Schulz,

President of the Ports of the Delaware River Marine Trade Association added, “This local support represents a great deal in the strengthening of our national coalition.”

Terminal Operators welcomed the support of local labor. “These are real American jobs that cannot be forgotten during this process,” said Delaware River Stevedore’s President Robert Palaima. “The cross-section of participants here today truly illustrates the commitment of the Delaware River port complex to this cargo,” said R. Adam McBride, Executive Director of the Port of Wilmington, Delaware. Echoing that sentiment was Joseph A. Balzano, Executive Director, South Jersey Port Corporation. “With local labor aboard, our Free Trade in Steel Coalition represents the broad spectrum of maritime stakeholders,” said Balzano. “Working together, both locally and nationally, we can ensure our voice and concerns are heard,” stated John F. Carr, Director, Sales & Marketing, Holt Oversight & Logistical Technologies.

By working with the U.S. Trade Representative’s Trade Policy Staff Committee in the next several weeks, the Free Trade in Steel Coalition plans to continue to illustrate the message of collateral damage. The USTR is expected to make his recommendations to the President next month. “We will be taking our broad-based support to Washington to carry our message forward,” said Rochford. “While this is a national issue, the potential local impacts cannot be forgotten.”

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