

DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ
20TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP

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CRIME, TERRORISM AND
HOMELAND SECURITY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0920

November 5, 2009

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Representative James L. Oberstar
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative John L. Mica
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

I write to ask for your support of a legislative fix that would provide critically needed local control over our port operations, enabling us address significant safety concerns while modernizing our port trucking and logistical operations.

The Port of Miami is the "Cargo Gateway of the Americas," maintaining over 176,000 jobs and generating over \$17 billion in annual trade through our community. By the year 2015, the Miami Harbor Project will be completed, dredging the cargo docking area to 50 feet and allowing the Panamax freighter class access to our port, further expanding our cargo volume. Additionally, Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida are about to begin construction on a billion-dollar port tunnel project to more rapidly move cargo in and out of this critically important facility.

Port Everglades, located in my congressional district, is another major economic driver for our community and provides substantial economic activity and jobs to our region. Port Everglades generates approximately \$18 billion worth of business activity, along with nearly 200,000 jobs.

Unfortunately, the South Florida ports' harbor trucking system is antiquated. Previous attempts to improve the safety of port trucking have largely failed due to the fact that federal law pre-empts our local governments from properly managing these community supported assets. Poorly maintained vehicles, overweight containers and unsafe chassis are still far too prevalent for trucks coming in and out of the ports. I frequently hear safety concerns from both residents and truck drivers about the dangerous conditions in which these trucks are required to operate.

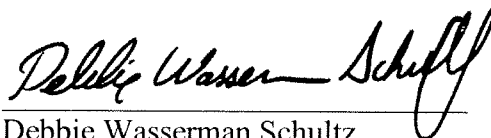
While the ports are allowed to regulate "motor vehicle safety" under the current version of the Federal Aviation Administration Authorization Act of 1994 (FAAAA), we are provided no real enforcement power. Currently the FAAAA only allows state and local entities to adopt regulations for a narrow scope of "vehicle safety" related programs. Unfortunately, the 30-year old statute fails to address the recent rise in the volumes and concentration of containerized trade. While such growth has brought

great economic benefits to ports and local communities, it has also created significant challenges in the areas of public safety, environmental protection, port security and overall efficiency.

For these reasons, I ask for your support in amending the motor carrier statute within the Federal Aviation Administration Authorization Act of 1994 (FAAAA) to expand regulatory exemptions for ports.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debbie Wasserman Schultz". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress