

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative: Applauds passage of Ocean Shipping Reform Act

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GREEN BAY, Wis. — Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, one of the largest dairy co-ops in the country, today applauded passage of the Ocean Shipping Reform Act by the House of Representatives.

The bill approved Monday, now headed to President Biden for signing, aims to reduce bottlenecks at U.S. ports that have impeded agricultural and other exports. Among other aspects, the legislation addresses exorbitant fees and cracks down on ocean carriers who refuse to ship agricultural goods.



“Trade is critical to the long-term strength of our dairy community. Providing more safeguards against unreasonable and unfair practices by shipping companies will help ensure our products get to market in a timely and affordable way,” Edge President Brody Stapel said. “Clearing out shipping backlogs is important to

untwisting the supply chain and reducing costs for farmers, exporters and our customers. Edge greatly appreciates the bipartisan work to get this done, and we are thankful for the leadership of Representatives Dusty Johnson and John Garamendi and Senators John Thune and Amy Klobuchar.”

The Ocean Shipping Reform Act will:

- Require ocean carriers to certify that late fees — known in maritime parlance as “detention and demurrage” charges — comply with federal regulations or face penalties
- Shift burden of proof regarding the reasonableness of “detention or demurrage” charges from the invoiced party to the ocean carrier
- Prohibit ocean carriers from unreasonably refusing cargo space accommodations for U.S. exports and from discriminating against U.S. exporters
- Require ocean common carriers to report to the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) each calendar quarter on total import/export tonnage and 20-foot equivalent units (loaded/empty) per vessel that makes port in the United States
- Authorize the FMC to self-initiate investigations of ocean common carrier’s business practices and apply enforcement measures, as appropriate
- Establish new authority for the FMC to register shipping exchanges

Source: Sen. Amy Klobuchar