



FMCS
FEDERAL MEDIATION &
CONCILIATION SERVICE

NEWS RELEASE

Monday, July 31, 2017
For Immediate Release
Website: www.fmcs.gov

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FMCS Applauds ILWU-PMA West Coast Ports Announcements

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) Acting Director John Pinto today applauded the recent announcements regarding a three-year contract extension between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and of the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA). When finalized on August 4, the extension will ensure stable labor relations among employers and the ILWU at all 29 U.S. West Coast ports to July 1, 2022.

The FMCS Acting Director praised both labor and management representatives for taking early and decisive action to resolve their differences well ahead of the scheduled contract expiration in 2019. “Recognizing and addressing mutual issues of concern in advance of a contract deadline is always our recommendation where difficult and complex issues are involved,” Pinto said. “ILWU President, Bob McEllrath, PMA Executive Director Jim McKenna, the members of their bargaining committees and the respective members of both organizations are to be commended for their success in utilizing the collective bargaining process to bring the hope of calm, stable, and continued economic progress to the West Coast ports and the U.S. economy.

Pinto added, “This is almost a text book example of following the blueprint of FMCS best practices to a successful conclusion at the bargaining table.” The extended contract was based upon the one reached in February, 2015 following what were characterized as “volatile union-employer relations.”

Those talks, which led to a settlement that ultimately restored the ports to normal operations, were successfully mediated by FMCS Deputy Director Scot L Beckenbaugh. With their recent announcements, the ILWU and PMA have extended the main provisions of that contract, with wage, pension and health care amendments, until a July 1, 2022 expiration date.

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The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, created in 1947, is an independent U.S. government agency whose mission is to preserve and promote labor-management peace and cooperation. Headquartered in Washington, DC, with 10 regional offices and more than 60 field offices, the agency provides mediation and conflict resolution services to industry, government agencies and communities.