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Trump backs US dockworkers in their battle against automation

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- by Shipping Telegraph

The U.S. President-elect Donald J. Trump backed ILA Longshore Workers against automation and semi-automation at a meeting held last week in Florida with the two top leaders of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA).

Trump met with the two top leaders of the International Longshoremen's Association, international president Harold J. Daggett and executive vice president Dennis A. Daggett, to discuss the union's negotiations with the United States Maritime Alliance, at a two-hour meeting at Mar-A-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida.

The soon-to-be inaugurated 47th president of the United States sent a lengthy message out on Truth Social, following the meeting with the ILA leadership expressing his support for ILA Longshore Workers, and taking a stand against the automation.

Trump wrote on Truth Social after the meeting, "There has been a lot of discussion having to do with 'automation' on United States docks."

"I've studied automation and know just about everything there is to know about it. The amount of money saved is nowhere near the distress, hurt and harm it causes for American Workers, in this case, our Longshoremen. Foreign companies have made a fortune in the U.S. by giving them access to our markets. They shouldn't be looking for every last penny knowing how many families are hurt," Trump wrote.

“I am so grateful to President Donald Trump for his courageous support for American ILA longshore workers,” said ILA president Harold Daggett. “He totally understands the threat that automation and semi-automation has in destroying jobs and families. He has stood up for us in his strong statement against the foreign-owned ocean carriers pushing automation on American ports and then taking their billion-dollar profits back home with them.”

ILA executive vice president Dennis Daggett shared the ILA’s concern that America’s national security is threatened from cyber-attacks on automated equipment from China and other U.S. adversaries, an issue president Trump indicated was of great concern to him and his advisors.

“I hope this strong support from President Trump will encourage USMX to remove any language on automated or semi-automated equipment in their proposals moving forward, and we can get a new Master Contract without any disruptions,” said President Daggett.

The United States Maritime Alliance, Ltd. (USMX) responded stating: “We appreciate and value President-elect Trump’s statement on the importance of American ports. It’s clear President-elect Trump, USMX, and the ILA all share the goal of protecting and adding good-paying American jobs at our ports.

“But this contract goes beyond our ports – it is about supporting American consumers and giving American businesses access to the global marketplace – from farmers, to manufacturers, to small businesses, and innovative start-ups looking for new markets to sell their products.

“To achieve this, we need modern technology that is proven to improve worker safety, boost port efficiency, increase port capacity, and strengthen our supply chains. ILA members’ compensation increases with the more goods they move – the greater capacity our ports have and goods that are moved means more money in their pockets.”