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Shippers Need an Ocean Freight Shipper Bill of Rights for a Fairer, More Transparent Future

Washington, DC - March 2025 –The introduction of an Ocean Freight Shipper Bill of Rights presents a promising step forward in strengthening the relationship between shippers and carriers, ensuring both parties benefit from clearer, more equitable practices. NITL Ocean Chair Siva Narayanan, Syensqo, sees such a Bill as a vital opportunity to address key issues facing the freight shipping industry, fostering a stronger, more efficient shipping environment. The proposed Ocean Shipper Bill of Rights offers multiple benefits that stand to improve the entire shipping process:

Enhanced Transparency: Shipping rates, terms, and conditions are often unclear, misleading, or even ambiguous. An Ocean Shipping Bill of Rights (OSBOR) will guarantee that shippers can clearly understand pricing structures, delivery times, and all relevant details about their shipments, eliminating ambiguity in the process.

Against Unfair Practices: A comprehensive OSBOR will establish clear protection for shippers, addressing concerns over hidden fees, delays, and disputes over damaged goods. This initiative-taking framework will ensure shippers are shielded from unexpected or unfair practices.

Promoting Consistency: By providing clear guidelines and expectations, an OSBOR will bring uniformity to the shipping process. Shippers will know exactly what to expect, simplifying the often-complex supply chain and ensuring smoother operations.

Boosting Efficiency: Universal guidelines will streamline operations by expediting resolution of disputes, enhancing customer service, and improving overall shipping efficiency. A standardized approach will also encourage greater collaboration between shippers and freight carriers.

Increased Accountability: A OSBOR will introduce clear accountability measures for carriers, including they meet reliability, communication, and cargo-handling standards.



This will ensure that shippers can depend on carriers who are held to high, transparent standards.

Supporting Fair Competition: The OSBOR will provide small and medium-sized shippers with better bargaining power, enabling them to compete on more equal footing with larger freight carriers. It will promote fair competition across the industry, benefiting all stakeholders.

A Freight Shipper Bill of Rights would usher in a new era of fairness, transparency, and accountability in the freight shipping industry. NITL will actively be reaching out to industry organizations, inviting them to join in support of this transformative initiative, which promises to create long-term improvements across the sector. NITL's Executive Director, Nancy O'Liddy, thanks our Ocean Leadership Committee for their efforts to create a fair and competitive OSBORs.

For more information on the Ocean Freight Shipper Bill of Rights or to get involved, please contact [NITL](#).

About NITL:

The National Industrial Transportation League (NITL) is a trade association since 1907 whose mission is to advance the views of shippers on industrial freight transportation issues and advance their professional development. NITL membership is comprised of companies engaged in the rail, maritime, and highway industrial freight transportation sectors who are committed to the competitive, efficient, and safe movement of goods across the United States and beyond.