

Date of Hearing: June 13, 2022

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
Laura Friedman, Chair
AJR 25 (Nguyen) – As Introduced January 14, 2022

SUBJECT: Regulation of vessel anchorages

SUMMARY: This is an Assembly Joint Resolution requesting the United States Congress and the President of the United States to immediately take action to increase resources for the enforcement of regulating vessel anchorages to both regulate the backlog of cargo ships and prevent future oil spills related to anchor strikes.

EXISTING FEDERAL LAW:

- 1) Authorizes the United States (U.S.) Coast Guard to establish, administer, and enforce anchorage grounds and regulations for vessels in navigable waters of the U.S.
- 2) Prohibits a vessel within Los Angeles and Long Beach Harbors from anchoring outside of designated areas except for emergency reasons, or with the prior approval of the Captain of the Port.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: On October 2, 2021 an oil pipeline 4.5 miles off the coast of Orange County spilled between 24,696 and 131,000 gallons of crude oil into ocean waters. Federal authorities confirmed that a 4,000 foot section of Amplify Energy’s oil pipeline was damaged and moved more than 100 feet along the ocean floor.

Early investigations have not identified an official causal event. Further investigations are looking at events for the entire proceeding year, as the leak could have resulted from collision damage due to ship anchorage and possibly a subsequent geological event. In February 2022, the U.S. Coast Guard said that the agency is still waiting for permits from federal officials before cutting apart the San Pedro Bay pipeline and transporting the damaged section to a lab for analysis.

Freight is a critical component of the global, national, and state economies. Californians depend on a goods movement system that provides communities with their most vital necessities including food, medicine, and inputs for manufacturing in a timely, efficient manner. However, the world has been experiencing global disruptions to the goods movement supply chain, which have been exacerbated by changes in the practices of numerous industry sectors during the COVID-19 pandemic and by changes in consumer demand during the ensuing economic recovery.

California’s ports are critical to the national supply chain. The Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach move roughly 35% of all containers in the United States, approximately 40% of U.S. imports, and 25% of U.S. exports through the San Pedro Bay. California’s nationally significant regional supply chains and goods movement networks have been negatively impacted by global disruptions, resulting in port congestion, extended shipping container dwell times, and bottlenecks farther downstream in the supply chain.

The backlog of cargo ships is receding. As of May 19, 2022 the total container ship backup at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach is 34 ships, down from 109 ships on January 9, 2022. The 34 container ships backed up include five container ships at anchor awaiting a berth in/off the ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach/Huntington and 29 slow-speed steaming or loitering outside the Safety and Air Quality Area (approximately 150 miles offshore).

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

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