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“Cargo on the Move Through California: Evaluating Container Fee Impacts on Port Choice” is our site of the day

This newly completed study, **[Cargo on the Move Through California: Evaluating Container Fee Impacts on Port Choice](#)** by professors James Corbett of the University of Delaware, and James Winebrake of the Rochester Institute of Technology found that a container fee at California’s three largest ports would have minimal to no impact on business. Most significantly, the study finds that a \$30 container fee at the Long Beach and Los Angeles ports would not adversely affect business.

For almost two years, state and regional leaders have discussed a container fee as a viable funding source to invest in infrastructure enhancements, security improvements, and strategies to reduce air pollution at California ports and truck and train corridors. While opponents say the \$30 fee, collected on each container that enters the ports, will cause businesses to divert their ships to ports outside the state, this new study finds these diversion fears to be unfounded.

The findings bolster support for Senate Bill 760 which aims to collect \$30 for each massive container moving through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to fund strategies to reduce air pollution, while also increasing port security and rail efficiency. It is the **[Coalition for Clean Air’s](#)** highest legislative priority. The coalition states that 2,400 Californians die prematurely each year due to air pollution from transporting goods, according to the California Air Resources Board. They argue that until now, the lives and lungs of Californians have been subsidizing international trade and that SB 760, if passed and signed into law, would collect the necessary funds to more adequately cover the full costs of trade – including \$150 million per year to protect health by reducing air pollution. This new study affirms that measures to pay now for these much-needed upgrades to our state’s goods transportation system will benefit business and the general public.

The ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles are the largest fixed source of diesel pollution in the South Coast region. The California Air Resources Board estimates 2,400 Californians die prematurely each year due to pollution from the transportation of goods. Goods movement alone puts nearly 3,000 residents in the hospital and causes more than one million school absence days annually.

In this post-9/11 era, shipping containers remain a highly vulnerable target. More than 90% of the millions of cargo containers that enter U.S. ports are never inspected. Hong Kong is scanning all of its shipping containers; the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles should settle for no less. Improving the ports’ security standards will help make Southern California the safest gateway to the U.S., while protecting the neighboring communities and the thousands of local workers in the trade and shipping industry.

A new **[July poll](#)** released by the Public Policy Institute of California, found that 71% of all adults surveyed (Republican and Democrat, in all regions of the state) were willing to support tougher air pollution standards for ships, trucks and trains that transport goods, even if it resulted in higher costs to business.

Cargo on the Move Through California was jointly funded by the **Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)** and the **Coalition for Clean Air (CCA)**.



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