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March 19, 2001

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CONTAINER TRADE SLOWS IN FEBRUARY

Amid an uncertain economic environment, container cargo volumes declined in February at the Port of Long Beach to the equivalent of 311,712 twenty-foot-long container units - a decrease of 7 percent from February 2000.

Containers filled with imports fell to 155,148 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), a decline of 12.5 percent from a year ago. This February's import total is the lowest one-month total at the port since February 1998. The port's leading imports are consumer goods such as clothing, shoes, toys and household merchandise made in Asia.

Exports decreased to 75,520 TEUs, a decline of 7.8 percent from February 2000. Exports have fallen in each of the last four months when compared to the same month a year ago. Export containers also have declined for three straight months when compared with the prior month. The port's leading exports are raw materials such as plastics, cotton and recycled paper used in Asia to produce the goods sent to the United States.

"While we caution against using one month's statistics to predict any economic trends, the weakness in trade does seem to reflect concerns about the slowing national economy," said Don Wylie, the port's managing director of maritime services.

Another factor in the weaker totals may be that the Chinese New Year was in late January this year. Many businesses in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan close for a week in observance of the holiday, which typically results in lighter-than-usual shipments between those countries and Long Beach.

Port of Long Beach Container Traffic (TEUs*)

	LOADED		TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL
	Inbound	Outbound	LOADED	EMPTIES	CONTAINERS
Feb-01	155,148	75,520	230,668	81,044	311,712
Feb-00	177,362	81,893	259,255	75,961	335,216
% Change	-12.5%	-7.8%	-11.0%	6.7%	-7.0%
Oct-00	235,511	88,541	324,052	108,880	432,932
Nov-00	213,065	90,756	303,821	107,076	410,897
Dec-00	180,631	79,351	259,982	91,408	351,390
Jan-01	194,746	77,073	271,819	82,622	354,441
Feb-01	155,148	75,520	230,668	81,044	311,712
Sep '00-Feb '01	979,101	411,241	1,390,342	471,030	1,861,372
Sep '99-Feb '00	955,292	424,231	1,379,523	453,797	1,833,320
% Change	2.5%	-3.1%	0.8%	3.8%	1.5%

*TEUs: 20-foot equivalent units or 20-foot-long cargo container

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