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**Protesting truckers shut down key port for California ag**

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By

Ryan G. Beckman, senior editor

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Protesting truckers have shut down cargo operations at the port of Oakland, one of the biggest gateways for California's agricultural exporters. The shutdown will further exacerbate the congestion of containers dwelling at the Oakland Seaport as port officials urge terminal operations to resume. Today marks the fourth day of protests over AB5, a state labor law that reclassifies independent contractors as employees.

While some celebrated the law, the California Trucking Association sued California State Attorney General Bonta over its implementation, saying it is problematic for the independent owner-operator model in trucking.

Last month when the U.S. Supreme Court declined to take up the lawsuit aimed at blocking the law, the California Trucking Association said, "Gasoline has been poured on the fire that is our ongoing supply chain crisis. In addition to the direct impact on California's 70,000 owner-operators who have seven days to cease long-standing independent businesses, the impact of taking tens of thousands of truck drivers off the road will have devastating repercussions on an already fragile supply chain, increasing costs and worsening runaway inflation."

In response to the truckers' actions, Danny Wan, executive director of the port of Oakland, said, "We understand the frustration expressed by the protestors at California ports, but prolonged stoppage of port operations in California for any reason will damage all the businesses operating at the ports and cause California ports to further suffer market share losses to competing ports."

Terminals at the port have stated they will be closed for both shifts today as a result of the ongoing protest activity.

"Truckers are vital to keeping goods moving," said Wan, "We trust that implementation of AB5 can be accomplished in a way that accommodates the needs of this vital part of the supply chain."

Earlier this year Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced plans to increase capacity at the port of Oakland to improve service for shippers of U.S.-grown agricultural commodities. Those plans included setting up a new 25-acre site to make it easier for agricultural companies to fill empty shipping containers with commodities.

*Photo: A still from the port of Oakland's traffic feed at its eastern gate showing a complete absence of activity.*

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[Ryan Beckman](#)

**About Ryan Beckman** | 

Ryan Beckman was born and raised in New Jersey. After studying creative writing at Rutgers University, he attended SUNY Binghamton and earned his master's degree in English. The following year he and his wife, Amanda, journeyed to the province of Ontario to spend some time living in Toronto and cheering for the Maple Leafs. Ryan and Amanda now live in New York and spend their evenings staring at their ever-smiling son, Oscar.

Ryan is always looking for a good book to read, is sure to be a few hours behind on sleep

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and will never stop loving 8-bit games.

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