

## February 13, 2004- Sanchez Introduces GATE Act to Fortify U.S. Ports

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For Immediate Release

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202-225-2965 Sanchez Introduces GATE Act to Fortify U.S. Ports

H.R. 3788 would protect American shipping economy and routes

Washington, D.C. &ndash; This week, Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez introduced the Guarding America's Trade Enterprises (GATE), which calls for development and implementation of a comprehensive cargo re-routing plan complimented by use of a secure long-range automated vessel tracking system, to aid maritime security, efficiency, and port safety.

"Over ninety percent of our overseas trade is conducted by ship. The timely and secure movement of goods through our nation's ports is key to our nation's economic and physical security," said Rep. Loretta Sanchez, ranking member of the Infrastructure and Border Security Subcommittee of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security. "As of today, there is no real system in place to re-route incoming cargo ships in the event of a port emergency in the United States. The confusion and delay that a shutdown of one of our ports would cause to our supply chain could cripple our nation's economy,"

House Resolution 3788, calls for the development of a plan to re-route cargo in the event of a maritime security incident at a U.S. port. The bill would establish a chain of command for executing the plan and provide authorization for the Automated Secure Vessel Tracking System, a global positioning system (GPS) that would track ships anywhere in the world, and authorizes \$10 million per year to operate the system, with an additional \$2 million for start-up costs in the first year, making the first year total \$12 million.

"After meeting with many members of the maritime security community, I think we have come up with a very workable solution in the event of an emergency port situation, which could potentially shutdown the U.S. shipping system," Sanchez said.

H.R. 3788 was referred to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.