



FAST PASS: Legislation To Expedite Critical Medical Supplies During A Crisis

Representatives Ezell (R-MS), Garamendi (D-CA) and Balderson (R-OH)

HIDA strongly supports H.R. 6140, the **Facilitating Access to Swiftly Transport Goods during a Publicly Announced State of Emergency Situation (FAST PASS) Act**. The FAST PASS Act would direct the Secretary of Transportation to initiate a study to examine efforts to expedite the movement of critical cargo through ports and marine terminals.

Throughout the pandemic, disruptive transportation delays severely limited reliable and timely movement of medical products, restricting the supply chain's ability to support healthcare providers responding to patients with COVID-19. The medical products supply chain relies on predictable transport to communicate product availability to providers, allowing them to deliver appropriate clinical patient care. Delays have negative consequences for patients and public health.

In 2021 and 2022, transportation delays became a healthcare issue. HIDA research estimates that approximately 31,000-46,000 containers of critical medical supplies were delayed an average of 29 days throughout the transportation system. A single shipping container can hold up to 3.5 million pairs of exam gloves, 187,000 surgical gowns, and 360,000 syringes.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) in its Supply Chain Assessment of the Transportation Industrial Base report recognized the need to "Develop a fast pass system to expedite global transportation of essential medical products." A permanent process must be established to ensure any future critical cargo can be expedited at U.S. ports and transportation hubs.

Key provisions of H.R. 6140:

- Create a "Fast Pass" process to expedite medical and other critical supplies throughout the nation's transportation system in declared emergencies
- Evaluate methodologies, practices, and processes for expediting cargo during a Federal Emergency
- Require DOT to consult with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and other relevant agencies
- Examine processes to mitigate impact on the movement of other cargo that is not deemed critical during an emergency
- Include recommendations for using data from commercial and government data tracking systems to determine which cargo is critical and when it needs to be expedited
- DOT will seek public comment and issue a report to Congress two years after enactment
- The agency has the option of establishing one or more voluntary pilot program to test the effectiveness of recommended practices included in the report

To cosponsor this legislation, contact Allie Cameron in Rep. Ezell's office.