

Our First October Surprise! The East Coast Port Strike Could Throw US Supply Chains Into a State of Chaos

If there is something that you really need to buy, you might want to get it now, because it might not be available later. The International Longshoremen's Association port workers are on the verge of initiating a strike which would shut down ports all over the East Coast and the Gulf Coast, and if that strike lasts long enough it will throw U.S. supply chains into a state of complete and utter chaos. Needless to say, this could have a huge impact on the upcoming election. If store shelves are quite bare in early November, millions of Americans will be in a very bad mood when they go to vote.

If it happens, the strike will begin on Tuesday. This is the first time that we have seen a strike of this nature in nearly 50 years.

Thousands of longshoremen at ports from New England to Texas are set to strike early Tuesday in the first walkout of its kind in almost half a century, freezing commercial shipping on a massive scale and disrupting the national economy weeks before the presidential election.

A strike would be the biggest disruption to the flow of goods in and out of the country since the height of the pandemic. Even a short-lived work stoppage would snarl shipping and create havoc in supply chains for weeks. Cargo ranging from cars to electronics, from food to furniture, would be stuck on ships offshore. Each day a strike lasts could cost the U.S. economy up to \$1 billion, according to analysts.

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If the strike only lasts for a few days, it won't really be a big deal.

But if it is an extended strike, major retailers such as Walmart and Home Depot will be facing massive supply chain headaches.

As the International Longshoremen's Association port workers move closer to a strike at East Coast and Gulf Coast ports, the union is warning that major importers such as LG Electronics, Walmart, Ikea, Samsung, and Home Depot will find no options to divert trade to Canada or the West Coast as other unions close ranks in support of its labor battle.

These companies are among the leading importers at the 14 major ports that an ILA strike would impact, according to ImportGenius. Overall, between 43%-49% of all U.S. imports and billions of dollars in trade monthly are at stake as the union moves closer to the Oct. 1 deadline for a new contract, over which talks between the union and ports management broke down in June and have not resumed. Cruise operations at ports would continue.

Joe Biden could have used a provision in federal law to delay the strike until after the election, but he has chosen not to do that.

U.S. President Joe Biden said on Sunday he did not intend to intervene to prevent a port strike on the East Coast and Gulf of Mexico if dock workers failed to secure a new contract by an Oct. 1 deadline.

"It's collective bargaining. I don't believe in Taft-Hartley," he told reporters.

Presidents can intervene in labor disputes that threaten

national security or safety by imposing an 80-day cooling-off period under the federal Taft-Hartley Act.

This could end up being a colossal strategic mistake on Biden's part.

If an extended strike causes serious economic turmoil as Americans head to the polls, that will not be good for the Democrats.

According to CNN, if there is an extended strike we could soon experience "shortages of chocolate, alcohol, popular fruit, including bananas and cherries, and even certain cars."

Businesses have been nervously watching the 12:01 am Tuesday strike deadline approaching with little sign of progress toward a deal to avoid a strike of tens of thousands longshore workers. Many have been doing what they can to prepare for the shutdown – but there are limits.

It doesn't make economic – or logistical – sense to ship many of the goods that come into East Coast ports by alternative ports of entry – or by plane.

That means America could see some shortages of chocolate, alcohol, popular fruit, including bananas and cherries, and even certain cars if the strike lasts a long time. That could mean higher prices for the goods that are available.

Of course that would just be the tip of the iceberg.

As we witnessed during the COVID pandemic, thousands of different products can be in short supply when there are major supply chain disruptions.

And once the strike is over, it may take some time to get supply chains back to normal.

As everyone discovered during the COVID-19 pandemic,

container ports are a choke point in a supply chain as essential to daily life in the United States as water, electricity and telecommunications. Disruptions have a ripple effect throughout the economy and are exponentially compounded as goods pile up at ports, terminals, warehouses and other distribution points. So it takes longer to restart the flow of goods than it does to stop it. Considerably longer.

The devastation caused by Hurricane Helene is also going to have an enormous impact on supply chains.

Sadly, the storm caught the vast majority of the population off guard as it carved a path of “apocalyptic chaos” all over the South.

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Apocalyptic chaos has struck down in the South as millions are left without power with desperate families lining up at gas stations and roving mobs steal generators.

The southeastern United States has been plunged into crisis as the aftermath of Hurricane Helene continues to wreak havoc across multiple states.

The storm has left a trail of destruction in its wake with the death toll rising to 64.

This is being called a “once in a generation” storm, and at this moment hundreds of roads in North Carolina and South Carolina are closed.

About 300 roads are closed in North Carolina and another 150 are closed in South Carolina, acting Federal Highway Administrator Kristin White of the US Department of

Transportation said Sunday. North Carolina officials on Sunday acknowledged those closures have hampered delivery of water supplies to communities in need, like the city of Weaverville in Buncombe County, which is without both power and water, Mayor Patrick Fitzsimmons said.

Even the largest highways in the region have been devastated.

In fact, it is being reported that Interstate 40 is “impassable” right now.

Interstate 40 is impassable between Tennessee and Asheville, North Carolina, and beyond, because of catastrophic floods from the remnants of Hurricane Helene.

A mudslide and flooding have shut down the route.

What a nightmare.

As I shared with my core supports on Friday, recovery is going to be measured in years in some areas.

One official in North Carolina is even comparing the storm to Hurricane Katrina.

Towns throughout western North Carolina, including Swannanoa, were transformed overnight by the massive storm. Muddy floodwaters lifted homes from their foundations. Landslides and overflowing rivers severed the only way in and out of small mountain communities. Rescuers said they were struggling to respond to the high number of emergency calls. Anxious relatives took to Facebook to search for loved ones they hadn't heard from.

“This is looking to be Buncombe County's own Hurricane Katrina,” said Avril Pinder, the manager of the county, which includes Asheville.

This storm wasn't supposed to be this powerful.

But after everything that we just witnessed, it is now being projected that the total damage from Helene could exceed 100 billion dollars.

Helene, a Category 4 hurricane when she hit the Big Bend of Florida on Thursday night, is forecast to leave behind between \$95 billion and \$110 billion in damage and economic loss. Property damage alone is forecast by Moody's to run \$15 billion to \$26 billion.

Last year, the number of "billion dollar disasters" established a brand new record.

It appears that we will break that record this year.

But of course what we have been through so far is nothing compared to what is coming.

We really are living in apocalyptic times, and the chaos is just getting started.

Michael Snyder's new book entitled "Why" is available in paperback and for the Kindle on [Amazon](#), and you can subscribe to his Substack newsletter at [https://substack.com/p/michaelsnyder](#).

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