

been organic. The company would consider overseas facilities or mergers, though it is not "on the radar screen," he said.

"The whole logistics market is around \$29.4 billion, so there is tremendous opportunity there," he said.

While ATCL&E's business has been built around doing logistics for what he says are high-value, serialized products that move

in high volumes — the company has a line that can process 50,000 items a day — he said the company might look to expand into areas that move in smaller quantities, such as medical devices or pharmaceuticals.

"Our IT systems are the crux of our whole operation. They allow us to batch control so it would be easy to migrate to some of these areas," Francis said. ■

solution like CRT's extends well beyond simply reaching sustainability goals, but also reflect critical operational needs.

A glance at the list of America's top importers will find RILA members throughout. Each year RILA members move millions of shipping containers through U.S. ports, onto trucks, and to distribution centers and stores across the country. Their market presence is enormous and is dependent on critical infrastructure.

Without improved air quality, port infrastructure expansion plans are met with powerful objections from local leaders and community groups demanding reductions in air pollution before proceeding to increased capacity. Without these necessary expansions, bottlenecks will persist and trucks will continue to idle, preventing swift in-and-out movement. The resulting air pollution completes the cycle that we all hope to break.

Working together with CRT, RILA and its members can, and will, leverage this market presence to expand upon CRT's success, deploy more clean trucks and effectively reduce air pollution in and around our nation's ports. Together we will be able to better educate national, state and local policymakers on the retail industry's achievements and its continued commitment to clean air.

Congress is considering a proposal supported by organized labor that threatens these public/private partnerships. This dramatic rewrite of federal law would give local ports the authority to impose a disparate and onerous regulation that would likely lead to service disruptions and put at risk successful plans such as CRT. What's more, the bureaucratic alternative would undoubtedly delay the future deployment of clean trucks and postpone the needed air quality improvements we all seek. By raising awareness of CRT's success, we hope to head off such misguided efforts.

Retailers continue to welcome the opportunity to work with port officials to meet our shared goals. We believe a public/private partnership works best when port officials set clear goals and deadlines and in turn challenge industry to meet those expectations.

We are thrilled to begin working together with CRT to expand upon their success and we welcome others to join with us to achieve our objective of clean air at our ports.

*Kelly Kolb is vice president for global supply chain policy for the Retail Industry Leaders Association.*



## Clean trucks, clean air

*How retailers are clearing the air at U.S. ports.*

PERSPECTIVE BY KELLY KOLB

**U**.S. retailers have embraced the pursuit of environmentally sustainable operations.

Across the industry and throughout the supply chain, retailers are seeking and implementing innovative solutions to reduce energy consumption and waste. Supply chain managers, well known for wringing inefficiencies to reduce transport time and cost, now have a new purpose: reduce carbon emissions.

As the trade association that represents these leaders, the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) has made a commitment to facilitate dialogue between retailers, policymakers and other thought-leaders, aimed at aiding in the development and adoption of environmentally sustainable practices throughout the retail enterprise. Our member companies, who are the largest and most innovative retailers operating in the United States today, are the most progressive in this pursuit and our work together has already proven highly productive. In 2007, the association launched the RILA Sustainability Initiative (RSI), a collaborative initiative designed to help leading retail companies meet and exceed environmental standards by pursuing environmentally sustainable activities and responsible business practices.

It is with these goals in mind that RILA recently announced an exciting partnership with the Coalition for Responsible Transportation. Founded in 2007, CRT has been a leading advocate for the implementation of practical and responsible solutions that reduce port truck pollution without disrupting the flow of commerce. CRT members include national shippers, ocean carriers, drayage providers and equipment manufacturers to which all have made substantial investments in cleaning up our nation's air quality.

Since the launch of the Los Angeles and

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*Private sector customers are able to develop an alternative framework that more than satisfies the ports' environmental goals through industry-supported investment in clean equipment.*

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Long Beach Clean Truck Program, CRT member companies have deployed nearly 2,000 model year 2007 or newer trucks into drayage service in Southern California. The vast majority of vehicles have been privately financed. These new clean trucks emit 80 percent fewer air pollutants than older trucks serving the port, and have been voluntarily deployed three years ahead of the port's 2012 deadline for 2007 emissions compliance. CRT's efforts have shown that private sector customers are able to develop an alternative framework that more than satisfies the ports' environmental goals through industry-supported investment in clean equipment.

Local leaders familiar with CRT's work in Southern California have applauded its success. The group's accomplishments have earned invitations from port authorities, including the ports of Oakland, Seattle, Tacoma and New York-New Jersey, to share CRT's insight as they develop and implement industry-supported clean truck programs across the country.

Looking ahead, carbon emission reduction is among a host of real challenges facing America's ports, but one with broad implications. The reasons for a proactive