

Federal Maritime Commission Looking Into Tariff Access Fees, Pass-Through Charges

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The U.S. Federal Maritime Commission has announced it will undertake a review of ocean carrier charges for access to common carrier tariffs. The Commission notes that access fees and subscription charges have in some cases reached as high as \$1,500, hindering tariff shippers and also service contract shippers seeking to access tariffs in excess of the minimum quantity commitment. The Commission states that unimpeded access to tariffs is imperative during periods of rate volatility. Furthermore, the Commission indicates it will be looking into NVOCC pass-through charges, i.e., charges for terminal services, canal tolls, additional charges, or other provisions not under the control of the carrier for which the carrier merely acts as a collection agent. The Commission seeks comments from the public within 60 days.

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