

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 17, 2012

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

In accordance with 36 U.S.C. § 120, President Obama has proclaimed Friday, May 18, 2012 to be "National Defense Transportation Day." We respectfully request that you commemorate this day by issuing a public statement expressing the Administration's unwavering support of the American mariner and continued enforcement of the laws collectively known as the "Jones Act."

As you know, the Jones Act is an important piece of our defense transportation network as it helps ensure that our military can deploy to far corners of the globe. During Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, privately owned domestic vessels helped move 90 percent of all Iraq and Afghanistan-bound cargo. This fact has led the U.S. Department of Defense to state, "we believe that the ability of the nation to build and maintain a U.S. flagged fleet is in the national interest, we also believe it is in the interest of the DoD for U.S. shipbuilders to maintain a construction capability for commercial vessels."

Additionally, the Jones Act is important to our economic security, supporting 500,000 jobs and adding more than \$100 billion to our economy. In return, our domestic mariners move approximately one quarter of domestic cargo for only two percent of the total transportation costs of our nation. This low-cost transportation system makes the products Americans buy less expensive and our exports more competitive in international markets.

Finally, the Jones Act is vital to our nation's domestic security. The security of our ports, waterways and coastal waters is of equal importance as the security of our borders. Each year, more than one billion tons of cargo are transported through these ports and waterways. The Jones Act ensures that U.S. built, U.S. crewed vessels move this cargo within the United States, thereby ensuring that homeland security officials are not forced to monitor tens of thousands of foreign-crewed vessels throughout our inland and coastal waters.

For these reasons, we believe a strong statement of support for the Jones Act from the official primarily charged with defending our homeland is a necessary and appropriate way to commemorate National Defense Transportation Day.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and look forward to your timely response.

Respectfully,



Jeff Landry
Member of Congress



Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress

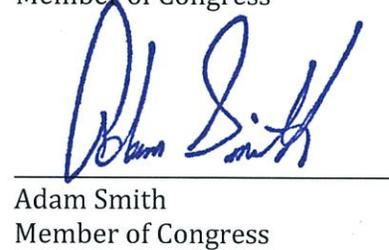

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Member of Congress


Colleen Hanabusa
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Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress

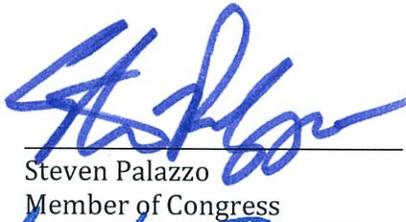

Mazie Hirono
Member of Congress


Bill Cassidy
Member of Congress

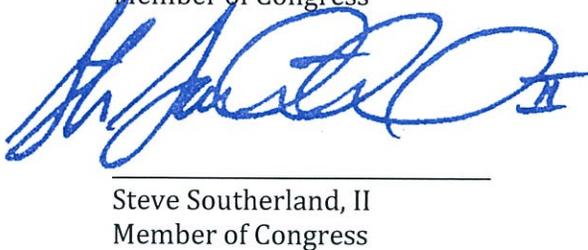

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