

September 2, 2009

Senator Carl Levin  
Chairman  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
SR-228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-6050  
Via Fax: 202-228-0036

Representative Ike Skelton  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee  
2120 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6035  
Via Fax: 202-225-9077

Senator John McCain  
Ranking Member  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
SR-228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-6050  
Via Fax: 202-228-0037

Representative Howard McKeon  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
2117A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6035  
Via Fax: 202-225-9077

Dear Conferees:

We are writing in regard to final passage of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, H.R. 2647, that is currently under negotiations in conference committee. Specifically, AAPA supports that portion of the Act included in the Senate bill that includes authorization of appropriations and other provisions for the United States Maritime Administration (MARAD). The MARAD provides invaluable support for public port authorities all along the nation's four coasts.

Language in the Senate version S. 1390 would provide new authorities for the MARAD to provide further service to the nation and to public port authorities. Section 6008 Port Infrastructure Development Program and Fund would provide for technical and other support for development of port-related infrastructure necessary for the efficient and effective functioning of the nation's freight system.

In addition, Section 6012, America's Short Sea Transportation Grants for the Development of Marine Highways provides a needed incentive to realize the full potential of America's marine highways. These coastal water routes complement other surface transportation modes, would help alleviate land-based modal congestion, provide a safe and secure alternative for sensitive cargos and would provide significant energy savings.

We urge conferees to include the aforementioned sections in final bill language.

Sincerely,



Kurt J. Nagle  
President and CEO

KJN:DBS/lsm