

November 30, 2009

The Hon. James L. Oberstar
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Hon. Frank LoBiondo
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Coast Guard and
Maritime Transportation
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Congressman LoBiondo:

The undersigned organizations represent U.S. and international vessel owners and operators, industries that rely on marine vessels to transport essential cargoes in domestic and international commerce, and labor unions representing the men and women whose work keeps this vital segment of our economy moving. Together, we want to strongly urge you to continue to work together in a bipartisan manner to pass legislation that will provide a uniform national approach to regulate vessel discharges.

We were very encouraged and gratified by your October 21 colloquy during floor debate on H.R. 3619, the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act, and your commitment to leading the development of a solution to an issue with critical implications for the environment and for the nation's economy. We thank both of you for the open demonstration of willingness to come together on this matter. We believe more must be done.

Simply put, the current statutory framework – in which the Coast Guard regulates ballast water under the National Invasive Species Act, EPA regulates ballast water and other vessel discharges under the Clean Water Act's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program, and some two dozen states have established their own requirements for ballast water and other vessel discharges because neither NISA nor the NPDES program preempts such a patchwork – is untenable. The absence of a uniform national framework for regulating vessel discharges places maritime safety at risk, undermines the efficiency of our nation's transportation system, and does not protect the environment in the most effective and efficient way possible.

We commend you for your leadership in demonstrating a common desire to seek a solution to this unacceptable situation. We would like to offer our services to work with you to secure strong, bipartisan legislation that will solve this untenable predicament.

Thank you for your consideration of our offer.

The Hon. James L. Oberstar
The Hon. Frank LoBiondo
November 30, 2009
Page 2

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Allegretti
President & CEO
The American Waterways Operators

Thomas Bethel
President
American Maritime Officers

Captain Timothy Brown
President
International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots

Joseph J. Cox
President & CEO
Chamber of Shipping of America

Terry Dale
President & CEO
Cruise Lines International Association

Thomas Danjczek
President
Steel Manufacturers Association

Matt Dwyer
Director of Legislative Affairs
American Maritime Congress

Jack Gerard
President and Chief Executive Officer
American Petroleum Institute

John R. Groundwater
Executive Director
Passenger Vessel Association

James L. Henry
President and Chairman of the Board
Transportation Institute

Don Keefe
President
Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association

Kendell Keith
President
National Grain and Feed Association

Christopher L. Koch
President & CEO
World Shipping Council

Kurt Nagle
President & CEO
American Association of Port Authorities

Brenda Otterson
Legislative Consultant
American Maritime Officers Service

C. James Patti
President
Maritime Institute for Research and
Industrial Development (MIRAID)

The Hon. James L. Oberstar
The Hon. Frank LoBiondo
November 30, 2009
Page 3

Brian T. Petty
Senior Vice President-Government Affairs
International Association of Drilling Contractors

Mike Sacco
President
Seafarers International Union

Joe Sparano
President
Western States Petroleum Association

Peter Swift
Managing Director
Intertanko

James H. I. Weakley
President
Lake Carriers' Association

Ken Wells
President
Offshore Marine Service Association