

October 6, 2008

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
508 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye:

As companies, associations and unions participating in the carriage of military and other government-impelled cargoes, we thank you sincerely for your effort to ensure compliance with the nation's U.S.-flag cargo preference laws. Your leadership resulted in cargo preference law enforcement language in section 3511 of the Maritime Administration title of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, and we greatly appreciate that.

Cargo preference laws help maintain a viable U.S. merchant marine capable of supporting military sealift requirements. You have worked tirelessly to support the U.S.-flag fleet, and the inclusion of the enforcement language helps guarantee the availability of certain cargo to U.S.-flag commercial ships, which in turn contributes to the financial viability of U.S.-flag vessel operating companies and helps ensure that the vessels, trained crews, and vessel services industries continue to exist.

We would also like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to the Commerce Committee staff, including specifically Ms. Margaret Cummisky and Ms. Dabney Hegg, who were critical to the enactment of Sec. 3511. They are incredible assets to you and the Committee, and their performance in guiding the provision through the legislative maze at the end of the Congress was exceptional.

Thank you again for your efforts, and those of your staff, to support the cargo preference laws and the U.S. maritime industry.

Sincerely,

**American Maritime Congress
American Maritime Officers
American Maritime Officers Service
American President Lines
American Roll-on Roll-off Carrier, LLC
Central Gulf Lines, Inc.
Intermarine LLC
International Organization of Masters,
Mates & Pilots
Maersk Line, Limited**

**Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association
Marine Firemen's Union
Maritime Institute for Research and
Industrial Development
Overseas Shipholding Group, Inc.
Sailors' Union of the Pacific
Seafarers International Union
Transportation Institute
Waterman Steamship Corporation**