

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 1, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,  
and Urban Development, and Related Agencies  
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,  
and Urban Development, and Related Agencies  
2083 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member Quigley:

We are writing to request that your Subcommittee once again include full funding at the authorized amount for the Maritime Security Program (MSP) in your Fiscal Year 2025 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Appropriations Bill. We also request that a defense 302(b) allocation in the authorized amount be provided to the THUD Appropriations Subcommittee to ensure sufficient funding for MSP as has been done in preceding years.

MSP is a vital component of our military strategic sealift and global response capability. It is designed to ensure that the United States has the U.S.-flag commercial sealift readiness capability and trained U.S. citizen merchant mariners available in times of war or national emergencies. MSP also ensures that the U.S. can provide our troops overseas with the supplies and equipment necessary to do their jobs on behalf of our nation.

In testimony on March 28, 2023 before the House Armed Services Committee's Readiness and Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittees, General Jacqueline D. Van Ovost, Commander of the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), emphasized the importance of MSP, "with the assured access provided by the 60-ship U.S. flag sealift vessel Maritime Security Program, and increased funding to preserve the operational readiness of the U.S. government-owned ships in the Ready Reserve Force, we will bolster our ability to conduct operations at sea and meet DOD requirements with the most useful capacity while maintaining a U.S. flag presence in international trade. This capacity and global reach through integrated networks provided by our industry partners is critical when we consider a theater such as USINDOPACOM." At that hearing, Rear Admiral Ann Phillips, Administrator of the Maritime Administration (MARAD) stated, "there are 60 commercially viable, militarily useful vessels enrolled in MSP. These vessels are active in international trade and are on-call to meet the nation's need for sustained military sealift capacity. The MSP supports and sustains the merchant mariner base by providing employment for 2,400 highly trained, skilled U.S. merchant mariners who may also crew the U.S. Government-owned surge sealift fleet when activated. The MSP also supports more than 5,000 additional shore-side jobs in the maritime industry."

As a public-private partnership between the U.S. government and the U.S.-flag shipping industry, MSP provides the Department of Defense (DOD) assured access to privately-owned commercial shipping assets, related global intermodal systems, and the active pool of U.S. citizen mariners necessary to support America's defense objectives around the world. This cost-effective program utilizes existing U.S. maritime private sector capabilities at a fraction of the cost of what it would take if the Federal government were to replicate the vessel capacity and global intermodal systems made available to DOD by MSP contractors who continuously develop and maintain modern logistics systems for commercial and defense purposes. The cost to the Federal government of replicating just the vessel capacity is estimated at \$13 billion. USTRANSCOM has estimated an

additional cost of \$52 billion to replicate the global intermodal system that is made available to the DOD by MSP participants. In contrast, the MSP, at the funding level requested, will provide DOD with U.S.-flag, U.S.-crewed militarily-useful commercial vessels and worldwide logistics systems at a fraction of the estimated \$65 billion it would cost the Federal government to do this job itself.

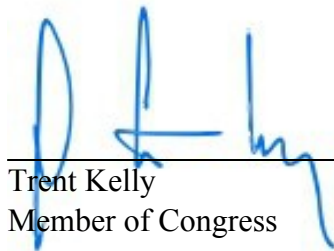
In closing, without a viable U.S.-flag commercial fleet and the American merchant mariners this fleet supports, the United States would be unable to deploy its military forces on a global basis and to deliver the supplies and equipment American troops need to do their job on behalf of the American people.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,




Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress



Trent Kelly  
Member of Congress



Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress



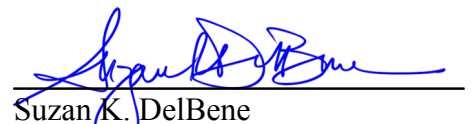
Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



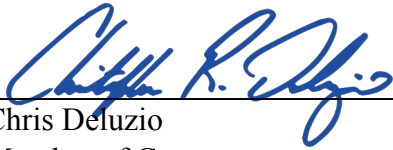
Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress



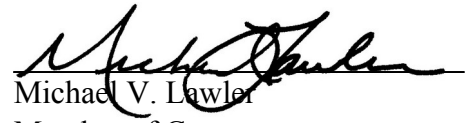
Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan  
Member of Congress



Nick LaLota  
Member of Congress



Chris Deluzio  
Member of Congress



Michael V. Lawler  
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Marcus J. Molinaro  
Member of Congress



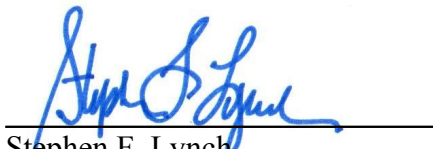
Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress



Andrew R. Garbarino  
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress




Stacey E. Plaskett  
Member of Congress



Jenniffer González-Colón  
Member of Congress




Nicole Malliotakis  
Member of Congress




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Jim Himes  
Member of Congress



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Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress




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Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress



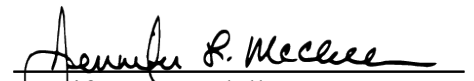
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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



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Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress




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Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress




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Rick Larsen  
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Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



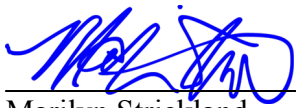
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Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



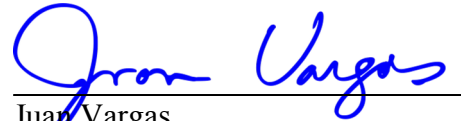
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Mary Sattler Peltola  
Member of Congress



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Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



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Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



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Sam Graves  
Member of Congress



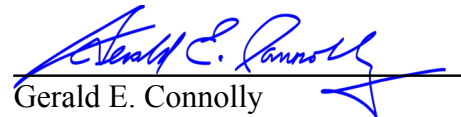
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Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress




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Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



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Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



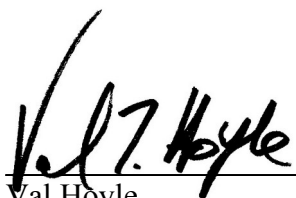
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Andy Kim  
Member of Congress



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Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress




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Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



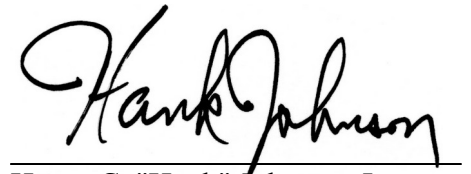
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Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



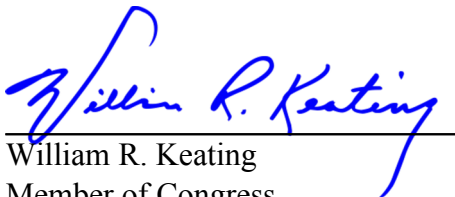
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Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



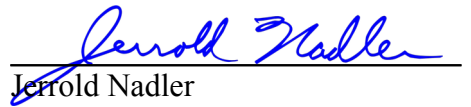
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



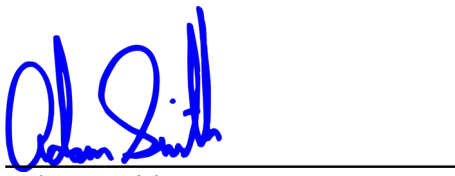
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William R. Keating  
Member of Congress




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Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress




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Adam Smith  
Member of Congress




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Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress



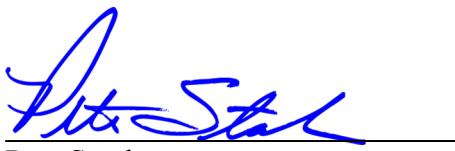
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Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress



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Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



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Pete Stauber  
Member of Congress



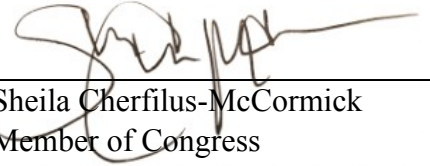
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Anthony D'Esposito  
Member of Congress



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Mike Bost  
Member of Congress



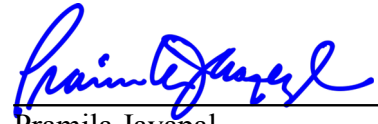
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Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
Member of Congress



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Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



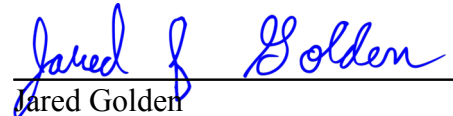
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Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



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Aumua Amata Coleman  
Radewagen  
Member of Congress



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Jared Golden  
Member of Congress



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Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



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John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



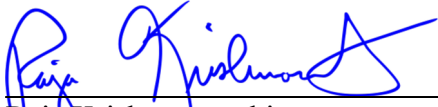
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Patrick Ryan  
Member of Congress



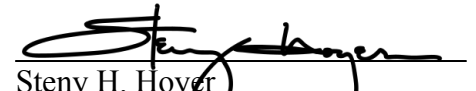
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J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



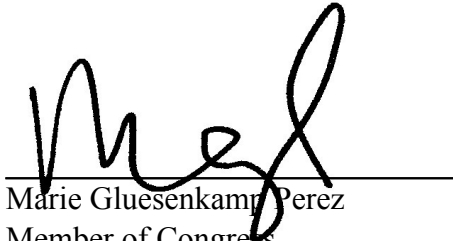
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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress




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Steny H. Hoyer  
Member of Congress



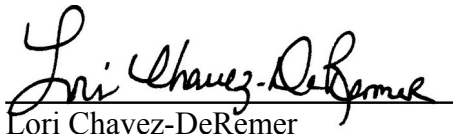
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Marie Gluesenkamp Perez  
Member of Congress



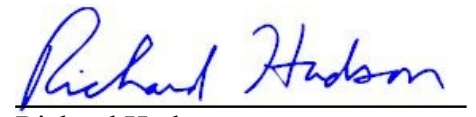
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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



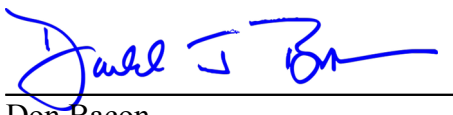
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Lori Chavez-DeRemer  
Member of Congress



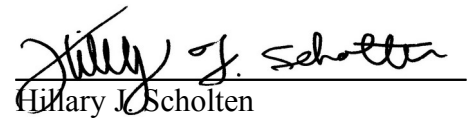
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Richard Hudson  
Member of Congress



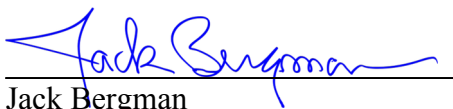
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Don Bacon  
Member of Congress



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Hillary J. Scholten  
Member of Congress



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Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress