

Ship/Shore Access

2010 Seafarer Regional Conference
Houston, Texas
March 9&10, 2010

WHEREAS International Commerce is the foundation upon which the welfare of this country rests.

WHEREAS more than 95% of US International Commerce is carried by sea.

WHEREAS the seafarers manning the vessels are proud, hard working and law abiding citizens who professionally fulfill the duties needed for International Commerce to continue.

WHEREAS International Commerce would be seriously impaired if even a few thousand seafarers refused to man the vessels.

WHEREAS the United States Coast Guard in Alcoast 108 / 08 recognized that, "Licensed and documented mariners are professionals who share our interests in a safe, secure and environmentally compliant industry".

WHEREAS the US Coast Guard has an existing program titled PTP (Prevention Through People), where they have specifically mentioned that the seafarer is one of the outer layers of defense under the marine domain awareness.

WHEREAS, in the Houston waterway alone, each year 170,000 International seafarers visit and contribute to the local economy if allowed free access to shore leave. Additionally, shore access issues potentially affect more than 1400 US mariners who call in the Houston waterway each day.

WHEREAS it is recognized that fatigue is a major contributing factor to maritime

accidents, and it is recognized that shore leave is necessary for morale and as a remedy for fatigue and stress, it is in the public interest that seafarers not be fatigued and that a high level of morale while be maintained.

WHEREAS the United States is signatory to treaties and a party to international conventions (ISPS) that guarantee shore access.

WHEREAS the Regulations governing facility security have always provided for access to shore.

WHEREAS the legal department of the USCG has reviewed the requirements and issued an opinion that such access is a requirement of an approved Facility Security Plan.

WHEREAS the United States Coast Guard has issued an Alcoast 575 / 09 directing the USCG Sectors to review Facility Security Plans to include adequate access.

WHEREAS Admiral Allen stated on February 12, 2010, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., that this is a priority for him and the Coast Guard.

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Congress should approve the USCG Appropriations Bill, which, as in versions since 2004, directs the USCG to remedy access to shore leave at “. . . no cost to the seafarer”.

That the USCG should direct each Facility Security Officer to clearly state that the Facility Security Plan meets the expectation of the USCG in providing access to Shore Leave, Seafarer Welfare organizations, Labor Unions, stores, bunkers and other services necessary for the normal operation of the vessel at no expense to the Seafarer.

Further, it should be recognized that the failure to provide for access is a contrary to the intent of the Code of Federal Regulations, International Treaty and standards of treatment of seafarers and should not be tolerated. Continued violation of the intent of the regulations to provide access should result in penalties to the violator.