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**Jones Act Did Not Hinder BP Oil Cleanup Reiterates Admiral Thad Allen Before House
Transportation and Infrastructure Hearing**

WASHINGTON – Retired U.S. Coast Guard Admiral Thad Allen, the National Incident Commander who led the BP clean-up effort, today told the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee the Jones Act did not prevent foreign vessels from participating in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill clean-up in the Gulf of Mexico.

“There was a misperception that the Jones Act impeded the use of foreign vessels for Deepwater Horizon response operations,” said Admiral Allen. “In reality, the Jones Act had no impact on response operations. As National Incident Commander, I provided specific guidance to ensure accelerated process of requests for Jones Act waivers.”

Admiral Allen said that there were no Jones Act waiver denials over the course of the recovery effort. “Any decision not to use a foreign flag vessel during the response was based upon an operational decision, not any limitations imposed by the Jones Act.”

Admiral Allen’s testimony today reconfirmed what he said during efforts to recover the oil that was leaking into the Gulf. On July 6, 2010, Allen declared that “at no time” had the Jones Act inhibited the clean-up effort.

His testimony comes just one month after a report from the non-partisan National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling confirmed the Jones Act did not prevent foreign vessels from assisting with the clean-up.

During the hearing, Rep. Jeff Landry (R-LA) asked Admiral Allen if “the waiver provisions of the Jones Act provide sufficient flexibility during emergencies.” Allen’s response was concise: “Yes they do.”

The Jones Act is a longstanding U.S. maritime law that mandates the use of American vessels and American workers in U.S. domestic maritime trade, such as the delivery of goods from one U.S. port to another. The Jones Act does not apply to skimming outside of three miles from shore, including near the well 50 miles from coastline, where the vast majority of skimming occurred.

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The domestic maritime industry annually generates 500,000 jobs, contributes \$100 billion in total economic output, adds \$46 billion to the value of U.S. economic output, provides \$29 billion in wages, and contributes \$11 billion in taxes.

Maritime Cabotage Task Force was founded in 1995 to promote the U.S.-flag fleet engaged in domestic waterborne commerce. With more than 400 members, MCTF is the largest coalition ever assembled to represent the domestic segment of the U.S. Merchant Marine. Nationwide, there are more than 39,000 vessels engaged in Jones Act commerce and they annually move more than 1 billion tons of cargo and 100 million passengers. The Act has been broadly supported by every Congress and Administration since its passage in 1920 and is considered a key element in the nation's defense capabilities. For additional information on the U.S. Maritime Cabotage Task Force, please visit <http://www.mctf.com>.

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