

MARCH 24, 1975

## Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed S. 332 - Maritime Authorization for fiscal year 1975 which authorizes appropriations for certain maritime programs of the Department of Commerce for the fiscal year 1975, and to require establishment of an office in the Great Lakes Region.

The bill will authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1975 for certain programs of the Maritime Administration of the Department of Commerce. The authorized funds will provide for the following at levels requested by the Administration:

- subsidies for construction or reconstruction of U.S. flag vessels, and for costs of certain national defense features for U.S. flag ships -- \$275 million
- operating differential subsidies -- \$242.8 million
- research and development programs to advance ship development and construction, ship operations systems, and port and intermodal transportation systems -- \$27.9 million
- maintenance expenses for the National Defense Reserve Fleet -- \$3.742 million
- operating expenses for the Merchant Marine Academy -- \$10.518 million, and
- financial assistance to State maritime academies -- \$2.973 million.

In addition, the bill includes a provision not requested by the Administration. It will require the establishment of a regional Maritime Administration market development office for the Great Lakes region in order to help assure consideration of the transportation problems of the Great Lakes. Similar offices are now staffed in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf port areas. The establishment of this fourth office, while not supported by the Administration, will be consistent with the legislative intent of current maritime statutes.

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