

## April 24, 2008: Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2008

The Honorable Loretta Sanchez

### COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

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Mr. Chairman, I thank both my chairmen for the time.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2830, the Coast Guard Reauthorization Act. As the chairwoman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Border, Maritime, and Global Counterterrorism, I have the jurisdiction over the Coast Guard's security missions. I am very pleased that the Homeland Security Committee had the opportunity to mark up this legislation and that we included several provisions that will strengthen the Coast Guard's maritime security activities.

This bill increases the Coast Guard's end strength by 1,500 members to ensure that there are adequate personnel to carry out all of the Coast Guard's missions. This addresses my long-standing concerns about inadequate staffing at the Coast Guard.

The legislation also requires the use of security zones around all liquefied natural gas, or LNG, facilities. This is a critical step in stopping these facilities from becoming targets as the number of LNG imports increases.

This bill will also improve the lot of the Transportation Worker Identification Credential, or the TWIC, by providing more facilities where workers can submit their fingerprints so they can enroll in TWIC more efficiently and meet the September 25, 2008, deadline. This affects 650,000 port workers. In addition, the legislation enhances oversight of TWIC by requiring reports to Congress and the GAO on ongoing program implementation.

H.R. 2830 requires the establishment of an additional maritime security response team. Currently there is only one in the Nation, and it is based on the east coast. It makes sense to have a second one, because, of course, there are plenty of people on the west coast, and we need it.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation and its many provisions. It strengthens the security operations and the safety operations that our Coast Guard does.