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Nation's Vessel Operators Praise Committee Passage of Vessel Discharge Legislation

ARLINGTON, VA – The American Waterways Operators, a 350-member trade association representing the U.S. tugboat, towboat and barge industry, praised the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee for the endorsement it gave to S. 2094, a bill that would establish a uniform national framework for the regulation of ballast water and other vessel discharges, by favorably reporting the bill out of committee with strong bipartisan support. AWO particularly thanked Committee Chairman Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), Ranking Member John Thune (R-SD), as well as the bill's original sponsors, Sens. Mark Begich (D-AK) and Marco Rubio (R-FL).

“The overwhelming support this legislation has received at every step of the process is a testament to the fact that S. 2094 is sound public policy,” said Tom Allegretti, AWO's President & CEO. “U.S. vessel operators face conflicting regulations from two federal agencies and more than two dozen states. The resulting regulatory patchwork is burdensome to our members and hinders the efficient flow of interstate commerce.”

“We are very grateful for the leadership shown by Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Thune, Sens. Begich and Rubio, and all the bipartisan cosponsors of this legislation,” Mr. Allegretti stated. “The committee's recognition of this serious issue and the decisiveness with which it has acted with its favorable markup shows how much the country needs this legislation. We hope we can continue to build on this momentum to keep this bill on a path to enactment into law.”

In addition to Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Thune, Sen. Begich and Sen. Rubio, S. 2094 is cosponsored by the following Senators: Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Roy Blunt (R-MO), John Boozman (R-AR), Bob Casey (D-PA), Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), Thad Cochran (R-MS), Susan Collins (R-ME), Chris Coons (D-DE), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Angus King (I-ME), Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Claire McCaskill (D-MO), Edward Markey (D-MA), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Bill Nelson (D-FL), Mark Pryor (D-AR), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Jeff Sessions (R-AL), Richard Shelby (R-AL), Patrick Toomey (R-PA), David Vitter (R-LA), Mark Warner (D-VA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), and Roger Wicker (R-MS). The bill is also supported by [nearly 60](#) regional and national organizations.

The American Waterways Operators is the national trade association representing the tugboat, towboat and barge industry which operates along the rivers, coasts, Great Lakes and harbors of the United States. Barge transportation serves the nation as the safest, most environmentally friendly and most economical mode of freight transportation. For more information about AWO, please visit www.americanwaterways.com.