

Congressional Mandate for MTS Task Force

Text of Public Law 105-383, 11/13/98, 112 Stat. 3411

RESOLUTION

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE

This Act may be cited as the "Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1998."

SEC. 308. NATIONAL MARINE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

IN GENERAL. – The Secretary of Transportation, through the Coast Guard and the Maritime Administration, shall, in consultation with the National Ocean Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Corps of Engineers, and other interested Federal agencies and departments, establish a task force to assess the adequacy of the nation's Marine Transportation System (including ports, waterways, harbor approach channels, and their intermodal connections) to operate in a safe, efficient, secure, and environmentally sound manner.

(b) TASK FORCE. –

(1) The task force shall be chaired by the Secretary of Transportation or his designee and may be comprised of the representatives of interested Federal agencies and departments and such other non-federal entities as the Secretary deems appropriate.

(2) The provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act shall not apply to the task force.

(c) ASSESSMENT. –

(1) In carrying out the assessment under this section, the task force shall examine critical issues and develop strategies, recommendations, and a plan for action.

Pursuant to such examination and development, the task force shall –

(A) take into account the capability of the Marine Transportation System, the adequacy of depth of approach channels and harbors, and the cost to the Federal Government to accommodate projected increases in foreign and domestic traffic over the next 20 years;

(B) consult with senior public and private sector officials, including the users of that system, such as ports, commercial carriers, shippers, labor, recreational boaters, fishermen, and environmental organizations;

(C) sponsor public and private sector activities to further refine and implement (under existing authority) the strategies, recommendations, and plan for action;

(D) evaluate the capability to dispose of dredged materials that will be produced to accommodate projected increases referred to in subparagraph (A); and

(E) evaluate the future of the navigational aid system including the use of virtual aids to navigation on electronic charts.

(2) The Secretary shall report to Congress on the results of the assessment no later than July 1, 1999. The report shall reflect the views of both the public and private

sectors. The Task Force shall cease to exist upon submission of the report in this paragraph.