

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 13, 2019

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing in strong support of the Jones Act and to voice our opposition to waiving the Jones Act for Puerto Rico. The Jones Act has been the law of the land for nearly a century supporting our economy and protecting our national security. As Members of Congress that represent the maritime and shipbuilding industry, we are concerned that any consideration by your Administration for a long-term Jones Act waiver to provide liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Puerto Rico could severely damage our domestic maritime industry.

The Jones Act provides that ships moving between American ports are U.S.-crewed, U.S.-owned, U.S.-built, and U.S.-flagged. It sustains thousands of high-paying jobs and ensures the military has access to U.S. flagged ships for the delivery of vital military assets. Waiving the Jones Act would help foreign entities, harm our American maritime base, and risk our military readiness.

A waiver for Puerto Rico is unnecessary and in direct conflict with existing law. For the next four years, Puerto Rico's infrastructure lacks the capacity to receive large scale LNG deliveries. Instead of a waiver, we should look toward recapitalizing an American-built LNG carrier fleet. This option is consistent with your "Buy American, Hire American" agenda.

Furthermore, the Jones Act may only be waived in the interests of national defense. Puerto Rico has no known national security justification for the waiver. Senior members of the military have consistently expressed the importance of the Jones Act to our national defense and sealift capacity. Vice Chairman of your Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Selva has said, "I am an ardent supporter of the Jones Act," and that it "supports a viable shipbuilding industry."

Thank you for your consideration of our perspective on the importance of the Jones Act. We look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,


STEVEN M. PALAZZO (MS-04)
Member of Congress


JOHN GARAMENDI (CA-03)
Member of Congress



DON YOUNG (AK-At Large)
Member of Congress



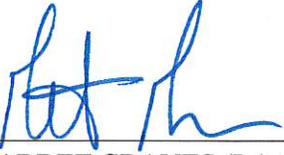
BRIAN BABIN (TX-36)
Member of Congress



PETER KING (NY-02)
Member of Congress



JOE COURTNEY (CT-02)
Member of Congress



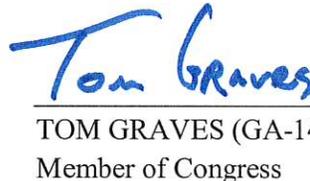
GARRET GRAVES (LA-06)
Member of Congress



ALAN S. LOWENTHAL (CT-02)
Member of Congress



DUNCAN HUNTER (CA-50)
Member of Congress



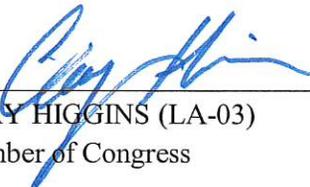
TOM GRAVES (GA-14)
Member of Congress



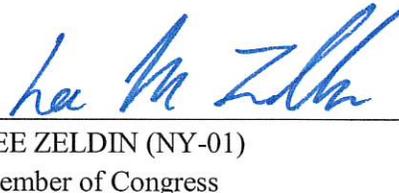
RALPH ABRAHAM, MD (LA-05)
Member of Congress



DONALD NORCROSS (NJ-01)
Member of Congress



CLAY HIGGINS (LA-03)
Member of Congress



LEE ZELDIN (NY-01)
Member of Congress



MICHAEL GUEST (MS-03)
Member of Congress



MIKE BOST (IL-12)
Member of Congress


DAVID B. MCKINLEY (WV-01)
Member of Congress


BRADLEY BYRNE (AL-01)
Member of Congress


BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK (PA-01)
Member of Congress

CC: Elaine Chao, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
Larry Kudlow, Director, U.S. National Economic Council