C. James Patti
Chairman

USA Maritime

Acting Administrator Lucinda Lessley
Maritime Administration
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

May 14, 2021

Dear Acting Administrator Lessley:

USA Maritime, a coalition of United States-flag shipping companies, American maritime labor organizations and related maritime associations, writes in recognition of Tony Fisher, the Maritime Administration Deputy Associate Administrator for Commercial Sealift, for his efforts on behalf of the maritime community during the COVID-19 crisis.

Mr. Fisher has long been a champion of the U.S.-flag maritime industry. The COVID-19 pandemic deeply affected the entire industry – from the hundreds of domestic workers manning MARAD's Ready Reserve Force Ships to those U.S. mariners maintaining the military and consumer product supply chain throughout the world. Drawing on his deep experience as a licensed merchant mariner, Mr. Fisher quickly undertook a leadership role to help our essential industry as it faced overwhelming uncertainty exacerbated by the unique nature of the industry. Our workforce has had special challenges during this time. Mariners on board ships could not social distance, do not have doctors on board, and faced extreme risks as they delivered the goods that kept America running. Working from home is simply not an option for America's mariners and maritime workforce.

Recognizing these unique challenges to a critical, essential, job-creating industry, Mr. Fisher went above and beyond to help us. When there was a face mask shortage, Mr. Fisher led the distribution of cloth facial masks to our industry, undoubtedly saving lives. When our industry needed to communicate with a cross-section of government, including CDC, USCG, TRANSCOM, DHS, DoS, and MARAD, it was Mr. Fisher who stepped forward to leverage his deep interagency ties ensuring the broadest coalition came to consensus on critical, short-fuse issues. He organized, hosted, and, with a genial, calming disposition, ran the three-hour, weekly calls to ensure our complicated, essential industry was sharing best practices, learning the latest CDC guidance, and could air our own concerns with government leaders. We appreciate Mr. Fisher taking on this extra

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labor at a time when we were all stretched beyond our usual capacity in the middle of a once in a lifetime global pandemic.

Mr. Fisher embodies what it means to be a public servant. He is dedicated, helpful, and puts the American people first. We are grateful for his leadership on our many issues during a time when we needed help the most.

Thank you,

C. James Patti
Chairman
USA Maritime