

**Senator Hutchison
Statement
Commerce Committee Hearing on MARAD Reauthorization
May 16, 2000**

Thank you Mr. Chairman. As chairwoman of the Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Subcommittee, I really appreciate your attention to this important maritime reauthorization.

Last year, this Committee successfully reported a MARAD reauthorization bill, of which I was the original sponsor. Unfortunately, the reauthorization for Fiscal Year 2000 ultimately omitted many positive provisions which had been supported by this Committee. I hope, Mr. Chairman, that we can once again work together to report a Maritime Administration bill that we all can support.

MARAD's important role in protecting U.S. shipping and defense interests should be preserved. With proper oversight, we should also continue the Title eleven loan guarantee program. High labor costs and other factors have historically placed U.S. Shipbuilders at somewhat of a disadvantage. The Title eleven program has been one way for Congress to partially counteract this problem.

MARAD serves important national interests not served by other governmental entities. Time is short for Congress to act to reauthorize MARAD. I am pleased that

the Committee is undertaking this significant project.