

DEFENSE QUOTES FROM SENIOR DOD/COAST GUARD LEADERS

You know the Jones Act isn't about a political statement and, to be honest, while it is an incredibly patriotic piece of legislation, my interest in it has nothing to do with patriotism. It has to do with cold-hearted math. The Jones Act trades, all of that trade that happens on our interior and coastal waterways, supports the industry that allows this nation to be successful. And so if I run the numbers, it's an easy call. There are 2,400 merchant sailors who operate on ships that participate in Jones Act trade that have crewed and will crew ready reserve ships and surge sealift ships -- that's 2,400 of the nearly 11,000 that are required. It's easy for me to say the economics favor the Jones Act, national security favors the Jones Act, and my operational requirements demand access to the labor pool that is supported by the jobs that are provided by the Jones Act.

So I have been accused of being cold hearted and heartless and on this one I can be both. I can stand before any group as a military leader and say without the contribution that the Jones Act brings to the support of our industry there is a direct threat to national defense, and I will not be bashful about saying it and I will not be silent.”

***General Paul J. Selva, Commander of U.S. Transportation Command
Now Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (2015)***

“If asked about the Jones Act – I am an ardent supporter of the Jones Act. [The Act] supports a viable ship building industry, cuts cost and produces 2500 qualified mariners. Why would we tamper with that?”

***General Paul J. Selva, Commander of U.S. Transportation Command
Now Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs (2015)***

“I think at the end of the day [changes to the Jones Act] would put our entire fleet in jeopardy. And then in a time of crisis, who are we going to charter to carry our logistics? ... Very difficult if we don't have a U.S.-flagged ship.”

“If we have foreign-flag vessels doing coastalized trade, what are the safety standards, what are the maritime pollution... standards, how are they in compliance with the same standards that we apply to our U.S. fleet?”

***Admiral Paul Zukunft, Commandant
U.S. Coast Guard (2014)***

“Unfortunately, our ability to project a force the way we did 25 years ago is no longer guaranteed. That should shock you. It shocks me. [Laws like the Jones Act help] delay the day when U.S. national security interests could no longer be supported by a U.S. mariner base springing from our commercial sealift industry.”

General Darren W. McDew, current Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command (2016)