

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) followed up on his commitment to secure our nation's borders by guiding legislation which would provide strong new border enforcement tools to protect national security and fight illegal immigration through the U.S. House of Representatives.

“On a recent trip to the U.S. Southern border, I saw first-hand the work our Border Patrol agents and National Guard members are doing to protect our country and prevent illegal immigration,” **said Arcuri**

. “It is an honor to be able to help those men and women by moving the Alien Smuggling and Terrorism Prevention Act forward – strengthening our borders and fighting human trafficking. We need a common-sense approach to immigration that includes patrolling our borders, preventing illegal activity, and upholding our laws.

The Alien Smuggling and Terrorism Prevention Act (H.R. 2399) would provide new enforcement tools at the border, including increased criminal penalties for: alien smuggling, human trafficking and slavery; drug trafficking; and terrorism or espionage.

H.R. 2399 subjects smugglers and traffickers to even higher penalties for transporting persons under inhumane conditions, such as in an engine or storage compartment, or for causing serious bodily injury. It also directs the Department of Homeland Security to check against all available terrorist watch lists alien smugglers and smuggled individuals who are interdicted at U.S. land, air, and sea borders.

Arcuri, a member of the House Committee on Rules, sponsored and introduced the Rule (H.R. 1126), allowing the House to consider the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007 (H.R. 2830) and, upon House passage today, add the Alien Smuggling and Terrorism Prevention Act to be sent to the Senate. The Alien Smuggling and Terrorism Prevention Act passed the House on May 22, 2007 by an overwhelming, bi-partisan vote of 412-0.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007 (H.R.2839) provides the necessary resources to allow the Coast Guard to fully execute its mission. The legislation would authorize 1,500 additional Coast Guard personnel and increase funding to the Coast Guard by \$8.4 billion - \$200 million over the President's request. H.R. 2839 would strengthen national security by directing the Department of Homeland Security to analyze the threat of a terrorist attack on

gasoline and chemical shipments and report to Congress.

It would also bolster port security and immigration enforcement by establishing an Assistant Commandant for Port and Waterways Security, authorizing additional maritime security teams and by establishing the Waterway Watch Program - allowing civilian boaters to notify the Coast Guard of suspicious activity.

“The men and women of the Coast Guard are to be commended for their service to our country and their commitment to the multi-faceted mission of the Coast Guard,” **said Arcuri**. “This legislation provides the necessary resources for the Coast Guard to continue to protect our nation and fulfill all of the components of its mission.”

Arcuri also supported H.R. 2839 in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee of which he is a member.

In March, Arcuri lead a congressional fact-finding mission to the U.S.-Mexico Border at Tucson and Nogales, Arizona, to see first-hand Border Patrol and National Guard operations to prevent illegal immigration. Arcuri toured U.S. Customs and Border Protection Activities in the Tucson, Arizona, sector and received informational briefings by agency officials and staff.

Arcuri is a co-sponsor of the Secure America with Verification and Enforcement (SAVE) Act, which would: increase border patrol agents by 8,000; utilize new technology and infrastructure to secure the border; create a pilot program to increase aerial surveillance, satellite and equipment sharing between federal agencies; expand the federal E-Verify program, which provides employers with an inexpensive way to verify employee eligibility; and expedite the removal of illegal aliens by expanding detention capacity and increasing the number of Federal District Court Judges.

[A copy of Arcuri's floor speech in support of H.R. 1126 is attached below:](#)

**U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24)
In the House of Representatives**

Rule for Consideration of H.R. 2830
House Resolution 1126
Opening Statement

April 23, 2008

M. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules I call up House Resolution 1126 and ask for its immediate consideration.

For the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Sessions. All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have five legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the Record.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

M. Speaker, House Resolution 1126 provides for consideration of H.R. 2830, the "Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007," under a structured rule. The rule provides one hour of general debate, with 40 minutes controlled by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and 20 minutes controlled by the Committee on Homeland Security. The rule makes in order 15 of the amendments that were submitted to the Rules Committee.

This rule also takes steps to prevent terrorist acts against our nation by allowing for the text of H.R. 2399, the Alien Smuggling and Terrorism Prevention Act, to be added upon House passage of the Coast Guard Reauthorization Act, and for the whole package to be sent over to our colleagues in the Senate. The Alien Smuggling and Terrorism Prevention Act, which passed the House on May 22, 2007 by an overwhelming, bi-partisan vote of 412-0:

Provides strong new enforcement tools at the border, including increased criminal penalties for: alien smuggling, human trafficking and slavery; drug trafficking; and terrorism or espionage; Subjects smugglers and traffickers to even higher penalties for transporting persons under inhumane conditions, such as in an engine or storage compartment, or for causing serious

bodily injury;

Directs the Department of Homeland Security to check against all available terrorist watch lists alien smugglers and smuggled individuals who are interdicted at U.S. land, air, and sea borders; and,

Tightens proof requirements for distinguishing covert transportation of family members or others for humanitarian reasons, for which the penalties are less severe.

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the Coast Guard has served as the primary agency responsible for our nation's maritime security. The fact that the Coast Guard has risen to meet this heightened responsibility, while at the same time continuing to fulfill its non-security missions, is a testament to the commitment and honor of the servicemen and women of the Coast Guard.

The bill that this rule provides for consideration will ensure that the Coast Guard can continue to perform all facets of its mission in an uncompromising way. H.R. 2830 provides the necessary resources by authorizing 1,500 additional Coast Guard personnel and increasing funding to the Coast Guard by \$8.4 billion -- \$200 million over the President's request.

The underlying legislation sets requirements for security around vessels that transport, and facilities that process, liquefied natural gas (LNG), giving the Coast Guard the responsibility for enforcing security zones and requiring it to certify that state or local governments have the necessary resources before they can assist in security patrols around facilities. It also directs the Department of Homeland Security to analyze the threat of a terrorist attack on gasoline and chemical shipments and report to Congress.

H.R. 2830 will bolster port security and immigration enforcement by establishing an Assistant Commandant for Port and Waterways Security, authorizing additional maritime security teams and by establishing the Waterway Watch Program whereby civilian boaters can notify the Coast Guard of suspicious activity.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act enhances safety standards in one of America's most dangerous occupations – the one portrayed on the popular television series “The Deadliest Catch” – by increasing safety equipment requirements on fishing vessels, requiring training for vessel operators, and by changing the appeals process for suspending or revoking a mariner's license.

The bill also addresses one of the Coast Guard's Integrated Deepwater Systems Program, which has been beleaguered by several well-publicized delays, cost overruns, and problems with the designs of certain replacement assets. The bill increases accountability for the Deepwater Program by addressing systemic contract management problems and establishing a civilian Chief Acquisitions Officer reporting directly to the Coast Guard Commandant.

H.R. 2830 also requires ships to begin installing water treatment systems to reduce the spread of invasive species in ballast water carried by ships. These requirements are a step in the right direction because they will protect the waterways of every state and territory of the United States, and the industries and communities that rely on them, from aquatic invasive species that enter the waters of the United States via the ballast water systems of commercial vessels. The bill also addresses other environmental concerns by requiring double hulls for U.S. ships carrying over 600 cubic meters of oil and providing for the implementation of an international agreement on maritime pollution.

M. Speaker, the legislation this rule provides for consideration is the product of extensive hearings and consideration by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Homeland Security Committee and the Judiciary Committee. I commend the Chairmen and Ranking Members of those committees for their commitment to addressing the needs of the Coast Guard and our nation's maritime security.

Thank you. I reserve the balance of my time.

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