MARAD Seeks Comments on Domestic Maritime Centers of Excellence Designation Policy

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) announced in an Aug 9 release progress in establishing Centers of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education (CoE), which would recognize and support community colleges and training institutions that prepare Americans for careers in the maritime industry. The Maritime Administration is seeking public comment on the proposed policy.

"These educational institutions benefit America's national security and economy by growing and strengthening our maritime work force," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

"America must be a strong maritime nation to continue its global leadership in the world," said Administrator Buzby, "which is why the Maritime Administration wants to spotlight institutions that excel at training Americans to serve on our domestic waters, dockside, and in related industries. The maritime industry provides rewarding, good-paying careers that also help to support our national and economic security goals."

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2018 provides the

Secretary of
Transportation with discretionary authority to designate eligible and qualified
entities as CoEs. CoE designations will serve to assist the maritime industry
in obtaining and maintaining the highest quality workforce while also enhancing
diversity and inclusion within its workforce.

When the CoE program is ready to accept applications, institutions can apply to the Maritime Administration to seek designation as a CoE by highlighting their success in preparing workers for maritime careers. If designated as a CoE, institutions may enter into cooperative agreements with the Maritime Administration to advance recruitment of students and faculty, enhance facilities, award student credit for military service, and potentially receive assistance in the form of surplus equipment or temporary use of Maritime Administration vessels. The public may submit comments until Sept. 17, 2019 on the CoE policy by visiting http://www.regulations.gov, searching for "MARAD-2018-0088" and following the embedded instructions.