American Waterways Operators Issues Statement on 60-day Jones Act Waiver Announcement

ARLINGTON, Va., March 18, 2026 /PRNewswire/ — The American Waterways Operators, the national trade association of the American tugboat, towboat and barge industry, today released the following statement on the Trump Administration's announcement of its decision to issue a 60-day waiver of the Jones Act:

"The Jones Act is fundamental to America's supply chain reliability and national security, and this broad 60-day waiver of this vital law puts both at risk. The breadth of this waiver is especially concerning, as it will unnecessarily impact transportation markets where domestic vessel capacity is not lacking. Allowing foreign vessels to transport cargo on U.S. waterways will introduce the price volatility of today's international market into our domestic commerce, creating instability in our thriving domestic supply chain and undermining American jobs while having no appreciable effect on the price of gasoline.

At a time of heightened concern about terrorist threats on American soil, the Jones Act also serves as a security bulwark against foreignflag vessels with foreign crews transporting critical cargo between America's inland and coastal ports, and ensures that American mariners remain the indispensable eyes and ears supporting the U.S. Coast Guard's homeland security mission.

Our nation counts on the Jones Act mariners of the American tugboat, towboat and barge industry to power the American

economy and help keep our communities and waterways safe. Waiving the Jones Act does not serve those interests.”

About the American Waterways Operators

The American Waterways Operators is the tugboat, towboat and barge industry’s advocate, resource and united voice for safe, sustainable and efficient transportation on America’s waterways, oceans and coasts. Industry vessels serve as a vital part of America’s supply chain and national security, moving the nation’s commerce on U.S. inland and intracoastal waterways, the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf Coasts, and the Great Lakes.