Transportation Secretary Announces Over $19 Million in Grants for Small U.S. Shipyards

WASHINGTON –
The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD)
announced $19.6 million in grants to support capital improvements at 28 U.S.
small shipyards as a part of its Small Shipyard Grant program, MARAD said in a release.

Provided
through MARAD's Small Shipyard Grant program, the funding supports employee
training and related improvements that foster increased efficiency and economic
growth, the release said.

"These grants
help create jobs in America's small shipyards, which play a significant role in
our country's maritime sector," Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao said.

In 2013, U.S.
shipbuilders produced $37.3 billion in gross domestic product. Usually
family-owned and employing less than 1,200 workers, small shipyards play a
critical role in contributing to our nation's economy. Supporting more than

400,000 jobs, they create employment opportunities for working families and small communities.

“Small shipyards are an irreplaceable aspect of America’s shipbuilding industry,” Maritime Administrator Mark. H. Buzby said. “They are a key component to national security and our economic viability as a whole, providing good jobs for hardworking Americans.”

Since 2008, MARAD’s Small Shipyard Grant Program has awarded more than $226 million for a total of 216 grants. These grants help fund upgrades and expansions that often lead to more competitive operations, quality ship construction and improved employee skill.

Having produced some of the most innovative vessels in the world, U.S. small shipyards have become economic backbones throughout the country. Small shipyard grants leverage the skills and expertise of the shipyard community, according to the release.