



UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND

608 SCOTT DRIVE
SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, ILLINOIS 62225-5357

4 May 2011

The Honorable Steven C. LaTourette
United States House of Representatives
2371 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515-3514

Dear Congressman LaTourette

I appreciate your recent letter requesting our views regarding the impact of a reduction in the Food for Peace program on U.S. Flag sealift capabilities.

Maintaining U.S. Flag sealift readiness is a top priority for the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). Sealift is the primary means for delivering combat forces and sustainment during major and contingency operations. USTRANSCOM's partnership with the U.S. commercial sealift industry is a vital component in meeting the Nation's strategic sealift requirements. To date, over 90 percent of all cargo to Afghanistan and Iraq has been moved by sea in U.S. Flag vessels.

Through programs like the Maritime Security Program (MSP) and cargo preference laws, the Department of Defense (DoD) gains access to U.S. Flag commercial sealift and transportation networks while ensuring the continued viability of both the U.S. Flag fleet and the pool of citizen mariners who man those vessels. The movement of U.S. international food aid has been a major contributor to the cargo we have moved under the cargo preference law that our U.S. commercial sealift industry depends on. Any reductions will have to be offset in other ways to maintain current DoD sealift readiness.

I hope this information is helpful. If you need further assistance, please feel free to contact my Legislative Affairs office at (618) 229-1886.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Duncan J. McNabb".

DUNCAN J. McNABB
General, USAF
Commander