



NEWS RELEASE

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OMSA APPLAUDS EFFORTS TO EXPAND OFFSHORE ENERGY **URGES DHS TO MAKE SURE JOBS GO TO AMERICANS**

Harahan, LA—The Offshore Marine Service Association (OMSA), the association representing the owners and operators of the U.S. Flag supply vessels that support offshore energy, has issued the following statement on the announcement today by the Obama Administration to increase offshore energy production from oil, gas or renewable sources:

“We strongly support efforts to expand our offshore energy resources, whether through opening new areas for oil and gas leasing or alternative sources like wind power and wave generation. This will help America achieve energy independence and create jobs at the same time. Energy expansion offshore and American jobs are connected.

But we need to call attention to the fact that an alarming and growing number of foreign vessels are working offshore, taking jobs away from American mariners and work away from American companies. If we are now going to expand offshore energy, we must ensure that the work is done by Americans.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is engaged in a rulemaking process to review its interpretations of the Jones Act, a law that requires cargo transported between U.S. points be carried only on vessels that are owned by Americans, crewed by Americans and built in America. An early analysis by Customs and Border Protection, a part of DHS, indicated that some of those interpretations wrongly allowed foreign vessels and foreign mariners to do work that the law said should only have been done by Americans.

DHS needs to reverse this dangerous trend as soon as possible because the stakes are very high. A recent economic study indicated that the U.S. flag offshore fleet is responsible for more than 100,000 American jobs and \$18 billion in annual business sales activity. Foreign vessels are not built in U.S. shipyards, generally don't hire Americans to work aboard, and are not subject to the same rigorous security requirements as the U.S. vessels. Moreover, recent Internal Revenue Service announcements reveal that many foreign vessels working in our offshore energy sector don't pay taxes on profits earned while in America.

The right offshore energy policy can provide relief to our nation's energy challenges and create new jobs – but let's be sure those are Americans jobs.”

OMSA is the national trade association representing the U.S. Flag offshore workboat industry. Visit www.offshoremarine.org

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