

SUBMISSION FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN, USA

July 12, 2000

Mr. Peter Morris, Chairman
International Commission on Shipping
Email: info@icons.org.au

Dear Mr. Morris:

Thank you for your recent letter concerning the international ship safety inquiry being conducted by the International Commission of Shipping.

The U. S. Coast Guard has the responsibility for safety regulation of vessels and their operations within waters of the United States. While international shipping is of great importance to businesses and industries in Michigan, the safety issues you raise fall within the purview of the federal government.

The State of Michigan is concerned with the unintended introduction of aquatic nuisance species as a result of ballast water discharges from ocean vessels. Some of these species have caused significant impacts upon our freshwater system. We are currently working with the shipping industry, the Coast Guard, other states, and academia to identify methods to minimize the risks associated with ballast water discharge. Michigan recognizes that the issue needs to be addressed at the international level, perhaps with standards requiring a combination of state-of-the-art technology, best management practices, and use of biocides, when appropriate. Economically acceptable solutions must be found which will minimize the threats posed by ballast water discharge.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide input in this important matter.

Sincerely,

John Engler
Governor