

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF

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RELATIONS**

CROWLEY

BEFORE THE

U.S. SENATE

**COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, &
TRANSPORTATION**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD, MARITIME, &
FISHERIES**

ON

**THE BLUE ECONOMY: ADVANCING AMERICAN
FISHERIES, MARITIME STRENGTH, AND COASTAL
ECONOMIES**

JUNE 2, 2026

Chairman Sullivan, Ranking Member Blunt Rochester, and members of the Subcommittee. My name is Clay Heil, and I serve as Vice President of Global Government Relations for Crowley. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Crowley is a privately held, U.S.-owned maritime, logistics, and energy company founded in 1892 and headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. For more than 130 years, Crowley has served commercial and government customers in some of the most difficult operating environments in the world. Today, our business includes logistics, vessel operations, fuel transportation and distribution, ship assist and escort services, vessel construction management, and government services.

We are also deeply committed to Alaska, where Crowley has operated for more than 70 years. Crowley employs hundreds of Alaskans and supports communities across the state by purchasing, transporting, storing, and distributing the fuels needed to heat homes, operate schools and businesses, fly aircraft, and power the vessels that support Alaska's fishing economy. In Western Alaska, Crowley operates coastal and river barges serving remote communities where marine transportation is not just a convenience; it is the supply chain.

Crowley's work in Alaska demonstrates why this hearing matters. The blue economy is not an abstract policy concept. It is the daily work of fishermen, mariners, shipyard workers, port employees, fuel distributors, tug and barge operators, seafood processors, and the families and communities that depend on them.

The Jones Act is essential to that system. It ensures that cargo moving between American ports is carried on vessels that are American-built, owned, crewed, and flagged. It also supports a domestic maritime workforce, a U.S. shipbuilding and repair base, and dedicated trade lanes that provide regular, reliable service to American communities.

That reliability is especially important for the fishing industry and for remote markets. Fishing operations depend on steady fuel deliveries, functioning ports, trained mariners, and vessels that can safely operate in difficult environments. Those capabilities do not appear overnight. They are built through long-term private investment, and the Jones Act gives companies the confidence to make those investments.

Crowley strongly supports the Administration's Maritime Executive Order and the bipartisan SHIPS for America Act. Both recognize that the United States must rebuild its maritime industrial base, expand U.S.-flag shipping, grow the pool of American mariners, strengthen domestic shipbuilding, and ensure that our nation has the commercial maritime capacity needed for economic security and national defense.

Those are the right goals, and Crowley is prepared to help meet them. For decades, we have invested in American shipyards, U.S.-built vessels, American mariners, port infrastructure, and the domestic maritime services that support American communities. But those investments depend on a stable and predictable policy environment.

The current Jones Act waiver undermines those efforts.

Crowley recognizes that true emergencies may require narrowly tailored waivers. Congress has provided a process for that purpose, and the maritime industry has always understood that national defense and emergency response come first. Crowley is proud of its longstanding role supporting national security missions. Our commercial operations employ and train American mariners and provide access to vessels, logistics capabilities, and global transportation networks that support military sealift, readiness, and crisis response when the nation needs them. But broad or recurring waivers that are not tied to a specific vessel need, specific cargo need, or the actual non-availability of U.S. vessels create a very different problem.

Such waivers send the wrong signal at the wrong time. At the very moment the Administration and Congress are calling for more U.S.-flag vessels, more American mariners, more shipyard capacity, and more private investment, the waiver invites foreign-flag vessels into domestic trades and weakens the market certainty needed to build that capacity.

The current waiver has also not solved the underlying energy problem. It does not create new supply or make global tanker markets less volatile. Instead, it shifts cargo away from American vessels and American crews while weakening the long-term business case for the domestic maritime capacity we will need in the next crisis.

Crowley stands ready to work with this Committee, the Administration, and our partners across the country to strengthen America's maritime economy, support our fishing and coastal communities, and ensure that the United States remains a maritime nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.