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JUL 24 2017

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman DeFazio and Congressman Garamendi:

Thank you for your letter dated July 19, 2017, regarding a Coast Guard security zone on the Potomac River adjacent to Trump National Golf Club in Sterling, Virginia. I appreciate the concern expressed and value your understanding of the Coast Guard's role while operating in support of the U.S. Secret Service (USSS). In response to the specific questions you ask, my staff and I welcome the opportunity to provide the following information:

The Coast Guard has long established maritime security zones associated with the protection of the President and other high ranking officials of the United States and foreign governments. Security zones are activated at the request of the U.S. Secret Service (USSS) to facilitate the safety and security of individuals under their protection. The USSS determines which government officials require such protection, and will call upon the Coast Guard and other law enforcement agencies to assist. The Coast Guard has not received a list of particular officials from the USSS relevant to this matter.

We principally use two methods to ensure the public is aware of Coast Guard limited access areas, which include security zones. First, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553 and 33 CFR part 165, subpart D, the Coast Guard published an Interim Final Rule in the *Federal Register* with the details of the Security Zone (Docket Number USCG-2017-0448). During the presently-open public comment period for this interim final rule, many constructive recommendations and concerns have been brought to our attention. The Coast Guard takes these comments seriously and has already taken steps to address concerns. Second, as required by 33 CFR 165.7, and implemented in past security zones, Broadcast Notice to Mariners (BNMs), which are marine radio addresses (VHF radio, channel 16 and 13), are issued to alert the public of security zone closure several hours before it goes into effect. Furthermore, onscene operational units will also inform the boating public about the security zone and may assist with transit through the zone as discussed below.

To ensure widest distribution of future activations, our local public affairs office will issue press releases and post them to Coast Guard pages on social media platforms. We will continue to work with our local partners to identify additional methods of information distribution to inform the public of the activation periods.

We will provide notification to the public as early as possible to minimize impact to the public, including small businesses. As stated in the interim final rule, persons desiring to transit through the security zone can receive authorization to do so by contacting the Captain of the Port (COTP), Sector Maryland National Capital Region at (410) 576-2518. During previous activations of security zones these authorizations were granted. We will continue to evaluate such requests on a case-by-case basis.

With the existing personnel and resources already assigned for similar security operations, the costs associated with enforcing this security zone are minimal and already allocated as part of routine Coast Guard operations.

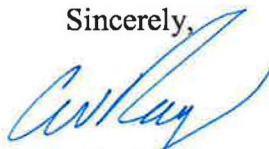
With regard to the replanting of trees, developing other physical security measures, or requiring private security, these activities would not negate the need and responsibility of the U.S. Coast Guard to support USSS efforts to ensure the security of covered government officials. Our responsibility and authorities to prevent and stop malicious maritime activity cannot be delegated to a private entity.

The public comment period for this interim final rule will remain open through August 9, 2017, and will include your letter and this response in the docket along with all other comments received. We will carefully evaluate each comment in the docket, and may modify our rule in response to issues raised by the public.

The Coast Guard's primary concern is for the safety and security of all Americans. Toward that end, we daily enforce numerous security zones, including moving security zones around cruise ships and fixed security zones near oil terminals, power plants, and military bases. We understand that the occasional activation of this security zone can be inconvenient to waterway users, but at the same time is necessary to ensure safety of those under USSS protection.

My House Liaison Office at (202) 225-4775 would be pleased to respond to any further questions you or your staff may have.

Sincerely,



Charles W. Ray  
Vice Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard  
Deputy Commandant for Operations