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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
FEDERAL MARITIME COMM

April 1, 2003

Bryant L. VanBrakle, Secretary
Federal Maritime Commission
800 North Capitol Street, N.W
Room 1046
Washington, D.C. 20573-0001

Dear Sir

The Florida Ports Council represents Florida's fourteen (14) deepwater seaports many of which provide service to cruise vessels and cruise passengers. The Ports of Miami, Canaveral and Port Everglades are the world's largest service providers to the cruise industry.

Florida's seaports have invested substantial assets to properly service cruise vessels at their respective seaports. By providing excellent service to the cruise vessel and its passengers, Florida's economy has benefitted from \$3 billion in direct expenditures and more than 101,000 jobs.

In Fiscal Year 01/02, Florida's cruise ports experienced more than 12 million passenger embarkations and disembarkations continuing the dynamic growth of the industry in Florida

As a result, the Florida Ports Council is concerned about any additional costs which may affect the industry's homeporting decisions. Current economic conditions in the maritime industry also give "wannabe cruise" seaports very real competitive issues when high costs and burdens on smaller cruise lines may result in additional barriers to market entry and growth in our diverse seaport community.

Consequently, Florida's seaports urge the Florida Maritime Commission (FMC) to retain the current \$15 million ceiling for insurance, escrow, guaranty or surety bonds,

The cruise industry has a superior record of catering to the cruise passengers. Florida's Office of Consumer Affairs reports very few complaints related to the cruise experience---a result of the excellent response by the cruise industry to its customers.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this very important economic issue for Florida's seaports.

Sincerely,

David Mc Donald

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