

**Statement from U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta on the Administration's response to the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy's Final Report, *An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century***

The Marine Transportation System (MTS) is a critical element of our country's vast transportation network. As the U.S. economy and trade continue to grow, the federal government must take a strong role in ensuring that all transportation systems, including our seaways and waterways, continue to support economic growth in a way that protects the environment. The President's response clearly recognizes those challenges and establishes an improved framework for addressing them.

The President's call for a national strategy that embraces more innovative approaches to accommodating growing freight demand is essential. So are his calls for elevating the Interagency Committee on the Maritime Transportation System to Cabinet level and establishing a National Freight Action Agenda. The Department will work with our Federal agency partners, state and local governments and the shipping community to carry out the President's vision for a better and more integrated national transportation system.