

SEPTEMBER 11, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H.R. 11670 -- 1977 Coast Guard Authorizations. This bill authorizes appropriations, end-year personnel strength, and student training levels for 1977 for the Coast Guard; extends indefinitely the authority of the Secretary of Transportation to rent inadequate housing to Coast Guard personnel; requires more specific and extensive Coast Guard authorizations in the future; suspends enforcement of the Federal Boat Safety Act on certain waters in New Hampshire in 1977; and authorizes exemptions from specified inspection or certification laws for certain cargo-carrying vessels in remote areas of Alaska.

H.R. 11670 will authorize appropriations of \$284,869,000 for the Coast Guard for 1977 for the procurement of certain aircraft and vessels, and the construction of certain onshore and offshore facilities.

H.R. 11670 will authorize a 1977 end-year strength of 38,918 for active duty personnel of the Coast Guard; The bill will also authorize average student training levels of 5,910 students, as opposed to the Administration request of 5,487 students.

The bill will extend indefinitely the authority of the Secretary of Transportation to rent housing to Coast Guard personnel and their dependents which technically does not meet established standards. That authority expired on June 30, 1976.

The bill will require that after fiscal year 1977, funds appropriated to the Coast Guard for operations and maintenance (O&M), all acquisition, construction and improvement (AC&I), alteration of bridges (AB), and research and development (R&D) must be authorized by legislation enacted after December 31, 1976.

In addition, H.R. 11670 will prohibit the Coast Guard from expending funds for enforcement of the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971 on Lake Winnepesaukee and Lake Winnisquam, their connecting waterways, or the Merrimack River in New Hampshire during fiscal year 1977.

Finally, the bill will authorize the Secretary of Transportation to exempt certain cargo-carrying vessels operating in remote areas of Alaska from specified inspection and certification laws. The provision would apply to vessels, mainly converted landing craft, which are the only feasible means of supplying fuel and stores to remote areas of Alaska where there are no available docking facilities.

#