

Statement on the National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) final public hearing on the Cosco Busan Accident

"The NTSB has confirmed that the pilot should not have permitted the Cosco Busan to leave the dock given a heavy fog and his impaired judgment. While his condition raises serious issues about the night in question, at a minimum we should require pilots of tanker and cargo ships to have the most up to date and modern navigation devices and equipment to prevent future accidents."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jonathan Kaplan, 202/225-1880

February 23, 2009

www.tauscher.house.gov

U.S. Rep. Ellen Tauscher (Calif.) released the following statement on the National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) final public hearing on the Cosco Busan Accident

"The NTSB has confirmed that the pilot should not have permitted the Cosco Busan to leave the dock given a heavy fog and his impaired judgment. While his condition raises serious issues about the night in question, at a minimum we should require pilots of tanker and cargo ships to have the most up to date and modern navigation devices and equipment to prevent future accidents."

Last week, Rep. Tauscher re-introduced H.R. 1100, the Vessel Navigation and Safety Improvement Act. This bill authorizes the Coast Guard to require that marine bar pilots carry their own navigation devices, known as Portable Pilot Units, when operating the largest container and tanker ships.

In the last Congress, this bill was included in the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007. The House approved the bill 395 to 7 on April 24, 2008.

“The use of these devices is an easy and practical way to improve maritime safety and protect our environment,” Rep. Ellen Tauscher said. “My bill will ensure that all San Francisco bar pilots have access to the most up-to-date navigation technology.”

The legislation requires the Coast Guard to work with local pilot agencies to determine the need for Portable Pilot Units in each harbor. It also requires the Coast Guard to promulgate training regulations to ensure that pilots are properly trained to use the devices. Examples of currently used Portable Pilot Units include laptop computers, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and Personal Digital Assistants (PDA). The bill is supported by the San Francisco Bar Pilots’ Association.

Here is the link to the NTSB’s press release: <http://www.nts.gov/Pressrel/2009/090218.html> and the findings from its public meeting are here <http://nts.gov/Publictr/2009/MAR0901.htm>