

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 9, 2016

Commandant Paul F. Zukunft
U.S. Coast Guard
2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20593-7000

Dear Admiral Paul F. Zukunft:

Following the proposal the United States Coast Guard (USCG) recently published in the federal register to establish up to ten new designated anchorage areas along the Hudson River from Yonkers, NY to Kingston, NY, we write to strongly urge the USCG to hold public hearings before any final decisions are made in order to allow community residents, stakeholders, public officials and advocates the opportunity to comment, discuss and impact this significant proposal.

According to the USCG, the intention of this proposal is to ensure safety for all Hudson traffic by formalizing where vessels can anchor by using federally designated areas. Currently only one such anchorage exists in this region. It is our understanding that, after receiving requests from Maritime Association of Port of New York/New Jersey Tug and Barge Committee, the Hudson River Port Pilot's Association and American Waterways Operators to consider establishing new anchorage areas along the Hudson River, the United States Coast Guard began the process of developing a proposal that would address industry concerns. We commend you for heeding their concerns. However, we believe it is imperative that the USCG schedule public hearing to maximize community input and expand community education throughout the Hudson Valley.

While the comment period for this proposal runs until September 7, 2016, the deadline to call for a public hearing in the federal register was June 30, 2016. This gave communities only three weeks from its post date of June 9, and ten days from when it was first reported on June 20 to call for a public hearing. However, due to the proposal's demographic reach, lack of public knowledge and significance, both in safety and potential impacts, we strongly believe this it is in the best interest to extend the deadline and conduct public hearings in order give the concerned public an opportunity to impact the proposal before any final decisions are made.

Again, we applaud the work you have done in order to make safety improvements to the Hudson River and your enduring mission to identify and address possible safety concerns.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator