



**M O V I N G T H E  
AMERICAN  
ECONOMY**

**U.S. Department of Transportation  
Office of Public Affairs  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.dot.gov/affairs/briefing.htm](http://www.dot.gov/affairs/briefing.htm)**

MARAD 10-07  
Friday, June 29, 2007

Contact: Shannon Russell  
Tel.: (202) 366-5807

**Maritime Administration Resumes Ship Disposal for Beaumont**  
*Agency Expects To Ask for New Bids Within a Month*

The federal government will soon resume disposing of ships from the Beaumont Reserve Fleet, the Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration announced today. A decision by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality opened the way for the federal action with its decision to permit hull cleaning of ships at the Beaumont Reserve Fleet.

Federal rules require the Maritime Administration to clean the hulls of ships prior to transport for disposal. Maritime Administrator Sean T. Connaughton had suspended ship disposal activity at the three National Defense Reserve Fleet sites in Texas, Virginia, and California until agreement could be reached between state and federal officials on a process to clear and ultimately remove the vessels. Agreement with Virginia was reached earlier this year.

"The State of Texas has made an important decision, one that makes the best environmental and economic sense for Texas and the nation," said Maritime Administrator Sean T. Connaughton. Connaughton said his agency will resume the process of bidding on ship disposal contracts immediately.

U.S. Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz praised the decision, saying, "Today was a long time coming. It is important that these ships are disposed of because they might leak oil or other pollutants into the water if they deteriorate further. Additionally, the ship disposal industry employs thousands of workers in South Texas."

The Maritime Administration keeps ships in the National Defense Reserve Fleet sites to support Armed Forces movements and to respond to national emergencies. When the ships become obsolete, the Maritime Administration arranges for their disposal in an environmentally sensitive manner.

###