

1 Houthis, which has threatened global supply chains,
2 increased costs, and required naval force protection
3 operations in the Red Sea through the United
4 States-led Operation Prosperity Guardian that
5 formed in December 2023.

6 (15) A fleet of commercial shipping vessels of
7 the United States, crewed with citizen mariners, that
8 is competitive in domestic and international trade,
9 and commercial fleets participating in the United
10 States peacetime economy enhance the United
11 States military's readiness, allow the United States
12 to more strategically compete with China, and un-
13 derwrites the security and survival of the United
14 States in times of crisis and war.

15 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

16 It is the sense of Congress that the United States
17 must—

18 (1) create a more favorable domestic and global
19 maritime environment for vessels of the United
20 States engaged in international commerce, ship-
21 building, ship repair, maritime logistics, the mari-
22 time workforce, and naval power, contributing to as-
23 sured access to the world's oceans free from coercion
24 from strategic competitors and asymmetric adver-
25 saries;

1 (2) increase domestic shipbuilding and ship re-
2 pair capacity, with programs and policies that enable
3 the growth of United States shipyards and the mari-
4 time industrial base, enhance military sealift capaci-
5 ty, expand the United States maritime workforce,
6 and enhance national security;

7 (3) revitalize the international fleet of vessels of
8 the United States and foster a comparative advan-
9 tage for the United States through targeted incen-
10 tives and regulatory reforms to make the fleet com-
11 petitive with international carriers and to gain a sus-
12 tainable share of the global maritime market in
13 order to bolster supply chains, strengthen economic
14 security, and lower prices;

15 (4) take all measures necessary to ensure that
16 sufficient military, civil, and commercial resources
17 will be available with assured access to meet defense
18 deployment needs and essential economic activities
19 for our Nation in times of crisis, war, or peace;

20 (5) recognize that a vibrant commercial ship-
21 building industry provides redundancies and creates
22 economies of scale that improve military, Coast
23 Guard, and Government shipbuilding and support
24 military operations through strategic sealift to de-
25 fend the freedom of the seas;

1 (6) ensure better coordination between Federal
2 agencies, including the Maritime Administration, the
3 United States Coast Guard, the Department of De-
4 fense, the Federal Maritime Commission, and all
5 other Federal agencies with a maritime nexus, to
6 protect, regulate, and support the United States
7 maritime industry, resolve disputes, and implement
8 a whole-of-Government national maritime strategy;

9 (7) establish reliable long-term demand signals
10 for, and investments in, oceangoing commercial ves-
11 sels that are built in the United States, documented
12 under the laws of the United States, and crewed by
13 United States mariners;

14 (8) evaluate past and present maritime efforts
15 to take actions to revitalize the United States mari-
16 time industry;

17 (9) strengthen the United States intercoastal
18 and domestic trade fleet, which is the foundation
19 upon which a revitalized United States-documented
20 shipping and domestic shipbuilding industry will be
21 built;

22 (10) recognize the important role that the sup-
23 port craft, passenger, and fishing vessel fleet play in
24 the United States maritime industry;

1 (11) encourage the shipping of commercial
2 cargo on vessels of the United States, with the aim
3 of growing the size and carrying capacity of the
4 international fleet of vessels of the United States;

5 (12) grow the shipping capacity of vessels of
6 the United States and guarantee United States Gov-
7 ernment cargo during peacetime;

8 (13) develop a whole-of-Government effort to
9 expand, develop, and protect the maritime work-
10 force;

11 (14) recognize the need for more workers in the
12 maritime sector and stimulate growth in the United
13 States maritime and shipbuilding industries, includ-
14 ing by increasing access to early maritime education,
15 commissioning national marketing campaigns to
16 demonstrate how United States shipbuilding, United
17 States-documented shipping, and maritime workers
18 are critical to national security, and implementing
19 workforce accelerator programs;

20 (15) remove barriers to training mariners, in-
21 cluding reevaluating Coast Guard training require-
22 ments regarding faculty credentials, instructional fa-
23 cility designs, sea time requirements, and other iden-
24 tified barriers, consistent with international treaty
25 obligations;

1 (16) expand and nurture a robust mariner
2 workforce that enhances the national security and
3 strategic sealift readiness of the United States by in-
4 creasing the number of United States mariners and
5 improving existing pathways and establishing new
6 pathways for new, current, and former merchant
7 mariners to go to sea;

8 (17) recognize that the United States Merchant
9 Marine Academy and our State maritime academies
10 are critical to training the next generation of li-
11 censed officers and engineers on vessels of the
12 United States;

13 (18) invest and innovate in domestic ship-
14 building, ship repair, and the shipping capabilities
15 and capacity of vessels of the United States to ad-
16 vance the power and influence of the maritime in-
17 dustry of the United States;

18 (19) drive multi-stakeholder research, develop-
19 ment, assessment, and deployment of emerging ma-
20 rine technologies and best practices related to the
21 maritime transportation system to ensure United
22 States leadership in next-generation shipbuilding,
23 ship repair, and maritime logistics;

24 (20) drive modern business and manufacturing
25 approaches, such as innovative maritime logistics,

1 clean fuels, and advanced nuclear energy, human-
2 machine teaming, additive manufacturing, and other
3 advanced technologies;

4 (21) review and update regulations governing
5 vessel design and engineering, vessel and facility op-
6 eration, and merchant mariner credentialing, in
7 order to revitalize the United States maritime indus-
8 try;

9 (22) seek mutually beneficial relationships with
10 treaty allies and strategic partners to grow the do-
11 mestic shipping and shipbuilding industries of the
12 United States and to share the burden of providing
13 freedom of navigation on the high seas, while de-
14 risking the United States maritime domain from the
15 People's Republic of China, foreign countries of con-
16 cern, and asymmetric or emerging maritime threats;

17 (23) harden critical maritime infrastructure and
18 networks, and incrementally replace infrastructure
19 built by foreign adversaries with domestic-built and
20 allied-built infrastructure; and

21 (24) promote the values of the United States
22 for quality of life, worker safety, environmental stew-
23 ardship, maritime independence, freedom of the
24 seas, and the resilience of our oceans, seas, and in-
25 land waterways.

1 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-
4 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-
5 gress” means—

6 (A) the Committee on Armed Services, the
7 Committee on Commerce, Science, and Trans-
8 portation, and the Committee on Appropria-
9 tions of the Senate; and

10 (B) the Committee on Armed Services, the
11 Committee on Transportation and Infrastruc-
12 ture, and the Committee on Appropriations of
13 the House of Representatives.

14 (2) DOMESTIC COMMERCE.—The term “domes-
15 tic commerce” means the transportation of goods or
16 passengers between places in the United States.

17 (3) FOREIGN COMMERCE.—The term “foreign
18 commerce” means—

19 (A) commerce or trade between the United
20 States, its territories or possessions, or the Dis-
21 trict of Columbia, and a foreign country; and

22 (B) commerce or trade between foreign
23 countries.

24 (4) FOREIGN COUNTRY OF CONCERN.—The
25 term “foreign country of concern” means—

1 (A) a country that is a covered nation (as
2 defined in section 4872(d) of title 10, United
3 States Code); and

4 (B) any country that the Maritime Admin-
5 istrator, in consultation with the Secretary of
6 Defense, the Secretary of State, the Director of
7 National Intelligence, and the Chair of the Fed-
8 eral Maritime Commission, determines to be en-
9 gaged in conduct that is detrimental to the na-
10 tional security or foreign policy of the United
11 States.

12 (5) FOREIGN ENTITY.—The term “foreign enti-
13 ty”—

14 (A) means—

15 (i) a government of a foreign country
16 or a foreign political party;

17 (ii) a natural person who is not a law-
18 ful permanent resident of the United
19 States, a citizen of the United States, or
20 any other protected individual (as such
21 term is defined in section 274B(a)(3) of
22 the Immigration and Nationality Act (8
23 U.S.C. 1324b(a)(3))); or

24 (iii) a partnership, association, cor-
25 poration, organization, or other combina-