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### **Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx Addresses Vessel Operators, Cites Industry's National Importance**

ARLINGTON, VA – On April 3, the American Waterways Operators, the national trade association representing the tugboat, towboat and barge industry, was proud to welcome U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx to address its annual Spring Convention in Washington, DC.

“AWO and its members share Secretary Foxx’s views on the importance of a safe and reliable transportation network. We greatly appreciated the opportunity to discuss with him our deep commitment to serving as safety leaders and environmental stewards, as well as the necessity of preserving the Jones Act, which serves as the foundation of our vibrant and vital industry,” said Tom Allegretti, AWO President & CEO.

“AWO has been one of the most vocal advocates for moving more freight by water safely and efficiently,” said Secretary Foxx. “DOT is taking action to ensure that our waterways figure more prominently into our nation’s transportation future.”

Secretary Foxx also recognized AWO as a strong supporter and welcome partner with the Department of Transportation. He cited the tugboat, towboat and barge industry as a key partner in his department’s strategic vision for moving the nation’s freight effectively as America’s economy, population and domestic energy markets continue on the path of long term growth.

“My boss is on the record supporting the Jones Act, and so am I – I will do everything in my power to defend the Jones Act,” said Secretary Foxx, echoing the longstanding position of the Obama Administration.

The 350 companies who make up the membership of AWO were grateful to hear the Secretary’s acknowledgment that the critical law is foundational to the domestic maritime industry and essential to U.S. economic and national security.

“The secretary’s attendance at the AWO Spring Convention so early in his tenure is an acknowledgement of the critical role the tugboat, towboat and barge industry plays in our national transportation network,” Mr. Allegretti continued. “We applaud him for working to advance the longstanding history of cooperation and goodwill between the Department of Transportation and AWO members.”

The American Waterways Operators is the national trade association representing the tugboat, towboat and barge industry, which operates along the rivers, coasts, Great Lakes and harbors of the United States. Barge transportation serves the nation as the safest, most environmentally friendly and most economical mode of freight transportation. For more information about AWO, please visit [www.americanwaterways.com](http://www.americanwaterways.com).

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