

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

CONTACT: ALANA JUTEAU

(202) 225-7163

Matsui Asks T&I Committee to Expand Hearing on Cruise Safety

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-05) sent a letter to the leadership of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure asking that, as they move forward on a hearing to review cruise ship safety in light of the recent Costa Concordia tragedy, the committee expand the hearing to also include a review of the implementation of the [Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act of 2010](#) .

Congresswoman Matsui sponsored the Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act, which became law in July 2010. The law has many significant provisions related to both the reporting of crimes on-board cruise ships, as well as physical requirements on ships that would protect passengers from harm. A number of provisions are due to go into effect at the end of this month. Congresswoman Matsui believes that the progress of the law's implementation should be a key part of the committee's hearing on cruise ship safety.

The signed letter is available by clicking [here](#) .

The full text of Matsui's letter is below:

January 24, 2012

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members,

I commend the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for calling a hearing to review cruise safety in light of the recent Italian Costa Concordia cruise ship tragedy. This incident highlights the need to more closely examine policies and regulations relating to the cruise industry. To this end, I respectfully request that the scope of this hearing be broadened to include testimony and a status report on the Coast Guard's implementation of the Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-207).

As you know, the Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act was signed into law in July 2010, with many provisions scheduled to go into effect this month. The law requires the cruise industry to comply with a number of security provisions, including specific rail heights, warning devices, and the installation of peep holes and other measures to improve cabin security. Moreover, this law necessitates that vessels be equipped with a video surveillance system to assist in documenting and prosecuting crimes, and that a log book be maintained to record reports on specific complaints. Finally, this law mandates that cruise vessel personnel contact both the FBI and the United States Coast Guard immediately after receiving a report of a crime involving homicide, suspicious deaths, missing U.S. nationals, kidnapping, assault and other serious occurrences. Because of the number of significant provisions the law contains, I believe that, as your committee considers the safety of cruise ships, it is also crucial to expand the hearing to ensure the proper implementation of the Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act.

Additionally, I would welcome the opportunity to testify on the importance of increased safety measures and the need for adequate oversight and regulation. Furthermore, I would respectfully request that the International Cruise Victims (ICV) also be included at this hearing and in future discussions on how best to achieve our common goal.

Again, I applaud you for bringing awareness to this important issue, and I look forward to working with you to ensure all passengers have the safest voyage possible.

Sincerely,

DORIS O. MATSUI
Member of Congress

###