

NEWS LOG

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Kvichak Marine Industries

Standing in front of the Coast Guard Response Boat-Medium prototype, Brian Thomas, vice president of **Kvichak Marine Industries**, Seattle, addresses the guests at the June 29 keel-laying ceremony for the first production-model RB-M. Kvichak and **Marinette Marine**, Marinette, Wis., will build 180 of the 45-footers for the Coast Guard. Kvichak will produce half of the boats at a new facility in Kent, Wash., and Marinette Marine will build the other half at a facility to be opened in Green Bay, Wis., in 2009.

Bill would reform troubled Deepwater program

In June, Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Thad Allen gave a U.S. House panel a rundown on all the changes being made to Deepwater, the troubled fleet modernization program.

Two days later, however, two congressmen introduced the Integrated

Deepwater Program Reform Act to keep a tight rein on the \$24 billion, 25-year overhaul of Coast Guard assets.

The legislation would prohibit the private sector from running the acquisition program within two years after the bill becomes law. That would mean an

NEWS BITTS

NEW ORLEANS TRAINING COMPANY PURCHASED

Houston Marine Training Services will continue to train mariners after all. Plans by Chicago-based **Kaplan Financial** to close the training school by the end of the year were shelved after **Alford Safety Services** Inc. of Houma, La., purchased the New Orleans-based company earlier this year. The deal is good news for Gulf Coast mariners. "The purchase was a win-win situation for all parties involved, most importantly the mariners themselves," said Roger Canafax, Alford Safety's maritime division manager. "We all know that time constraints and class sizes make it difficult for many mariners to complete required training for advancement. The maritime industry certainly did not need the closure of a school to complicate matters further." Louisiana's Incumbent Worker Training Program provides grant money each year to companies specifically for mariner training. And, Canafax said, many of those grants could have been lost if Houston Marine had closed. "With the closure of a school, it makes it that much harder for companies to receive the training they need," Canafax said. "And if the IWTP money [in a fiscal year] is not spent, chances are the schools won't be approved for the same amount of training funds the next year."

— Matt Gresham