

SUBJ: NAMING OF THE FIRST SENTINEL CLASS CUTTER

1. I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE NAME OF THE FIRST FAST RESPONSE CUTTER IN THE SENTINEL CLASS WILL BE THE BERNARD C. WEBBER. A SENTINEL CLASS CUTTER WILL BE 153 FT, CAPABLE OF 28 PLUS KNOTS, WITH A CREW OF 22 GUARDIANS. WE ARE PLANNING TO BUILD 58 OF THESE VESSELS TO REPLACE THE AGING 110 FOOT ISLAND CLASS.

2. THE CUTTER BERNARD C. WEBBER IS NAMED FOR PETTY OFFICER FIRST CLASS BERNIE WEBBER WHO EXECUTED ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS RESCUES IN COAST GUARD HISTORY. HE PILOTED MOTOR LIFEBOAT CG-36500, FROM STATION CHATHAM, MASSACHUSETTS, TO THE STRICKEN FREIGHTER PENDLETON WHICH SPLIT INTO TWO DURING A MASSIVE STORM OFF OF CAPE COD ON FEBRUARY 18TH 1952. FIGHTING 70KT WINDS, 50FT SEAS, DRIVING SNOW, AND DESPITE LOSING THEIR COMPASS AND WINDSHIELD SOON AFTER GETTING UNDERWAY, WEBBER AND HIS THREE CREWMEMBERS REACHED THE FREIGHTER AND SAFELY RESCUED 32 SAILORS. THEY RECEIVED THE GOLD LIFESAVING MEDAL FOR THEIR HEROISM. PETTY OFFICER WEBBERS SELFLESS BEHAVIOR AND COURAGEOUS ACTIONS DEFINE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A GUARDIAN. HIS LEGACY WILL CONTINUE TO INSPIRE THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SAIL ON THE CUTTER THAT BEARS HIS NAME.

3. THE KEEL LAYING CEREMONY, THE FIRST MAJOR MILESTONE IN A SHIP'S CONSTRUCTION, FOR THE CUTTER BERNARD C. WEBBER WILL BE ON 09 APRIL 2010 IN LOCKPORT, LA. WE ARE HONORED THAT HIS DAUGHTER, PATRICIA, WILL BE THE SHIPS SPONSOR AND HIS GRANDDAUGHTERS, LEAH AND HILARY, WILL BE THE MAIDS OF HONOR. THEIR PRESENCE WILL FORM A LIVING LINK BETWEEN PETTY OFFICER WEBBER AND THE CUTTER.

4. ALL OF THE SENTINEL CLASS CUTTERS WILL BE NAMED AFTER ENLISTED HEROES TO HONOR OUR PAST GUARDIANS WHO STOOD THE WATCH. BY CHOOSING THIS NAMING STRATEGY, WE CAN HIGHLIGHT OUR MARITIME HERITAGE BY TELLING THE STORIES OF THE PEOPLE WHO CREATED OUR VIBRANT HISTORY.

5. AS ALEXANDER HAMILTON ENVISIONED, "A FEW ARMED VESSELS JUDICIOUSLY STATIONED AT THE ENTRANCE TO OUR PORTS, MIGHT BE USEFUL SENTINELS OF THE LAW". THE BERNARD C. WEBBER AND ALL OF THE SENTINEL CLASS CUTTERS WILL CONTINUE TO FULFILL THE VISION THAT HAMILTON SAW FOR OUR SERVICE OVER 200 YEARS AGO.

6. PLEASE VISIT THESE SITES FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE SENTINEL CLASS, [HTTP://WWW.USCG.MIL/ACQUISITION/SENTINEL/](http://www.uscg.mil/acquisition/sentinel/), AND PETTY OFFICER WEBBER, [HTTP://WWW.CG36500.ORG/RESCUE.HTML](http://www.cg36500.org/rescue.html).

7. ADM T. W. ALLEN, COMMANDANT, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD, SENDS.

8. INTERNET RELEASE AUTHORIZED.

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