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Thomas J. Barrett Confirmed as First Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administrator

Vice Admiral Thomas J. Barrett, U.S. Coast Guard (Ret.), was sworn in by U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta as the first Administrator for the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) on May 31, 2006.

Barrett was nominated for the PHMSA post by President George W. Bush on January 24, 2006 and confirmed by the Senate by unanimous consent on May 26. He will direct the agency's national programs responsible for ensuring the safe transport of natural gas, liquefied natural gas, and hazardous liquids by pipeline and the transportation of hazardous materials by all modes of transportation.

"I've known Tom Barrett for years, and he is the right person to lead PHMSA," said Secretary Mineta. "He is an outstanding, practical leader skilled in managing a large organization, and in building partnerships with industry and relationships on Capitol Hill."

Barrett returns to public service after serving as vice president and chief operating officer of the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, a public policy research institute.

Barrett served 35 years in the U.S. Coast Guard, attaining that service's number two position as Vice Commandant. He helped strengthen maritime security after September 11, transitioning the Coast Guard into the new Department of Homeland Security, and expanding Coast Guard support to the National Foreign Intelligence Committee. During his Coast Guard career, Barrett commanded force operations in the Gulf of Alaska; expanded operational partnerships with Russia; served as the Agency Acquisition Executive; and co-chaired the Navy-Coast Guard Board, an interservice policy coordination body. Barrett's awards include the Coast Guard Distinguished Service Medal and the Legion of Merit.

Barrett earned a B.S. in Biology from LeMoyne College and a Juris Doctor with honors from George Washington University. He is a graduate of the Army War College and the National Capstone Course in National Security and Military Capabilities.

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