

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 30, 2025

Admiral Kevin E. Lunday, Acting Commandant
U.S. Coast Guard
2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE
Washington, DC 20593

Dear Acting Commandant Lunday,

We write today to provide comment to the U.S Coast Guard regarding the First District Coastal Buoy Modernization Initiative Proposal.

We support the adoption of technologies such as Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), Electronic Navigation Charts (ENC), and Electronic Charting Systems (ECS) to enhance maritime navigation and improve efficiency. At the same time, we believe these systems should complement—not replace—the physical buoy infrastructure that remains essential for safety, redundancy, and accessibility across the Northeast. We have deep concerns over buoy discontinuation efforts and urge you to consider the value of visual navigation markers. Safety must be the top priority when maintaining Federal Aids to Navigation (ATON) and supporting mariners. The northeastern coast has many hazards to avoid, and tides, currents, and difficult weather conditions can make navigation challenging even for experienced mariners. In situations such as these, it is imperative to ensure all safety measures are available, both technological and visual.

Visual navigation markers are essential to maritime economies and the communities we represent. As fishermen, passenger vessels, and recreational boaters alike use these buoys as a reliable safety measure to maneuver through inclement weather and sporadic access to technology on the water. A local captain of a passenger vessel likened the effort to removing traffic signs from the highways since many drivers now have access to GPS systems. Buoys provide a critical layer of safety while navigating complicated coastline, especially when technology may fail in rural areas. Buoy constellations and technology should work together to create safe and resilient navigational service to mariners, rather than creating a system that overly relies on just one.

We are grateful to the Coast Guard for your commitment to ensuring the safety of all those who depend on and enjoy our waters and strongly encourage you to recognize the importance of preserving buoy constellations in navigationally complicated areas. We appreciate your engagement with stakeholders who are affected by this proposal, and request that you extend the period for public comment by one month in order to receive the best possible feedback from the maritime community. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our offices if we can provide any further information.

Sincerely,



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Laura A. Gillen
Member of Congress



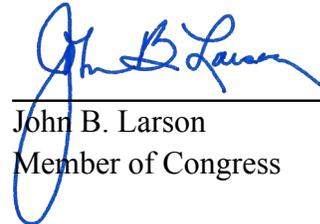
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Nick LaLota
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



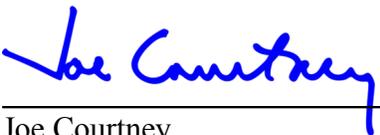
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

