

Video Highlights Importance of US Tugboat, Towboat and Barge Industry

BY [THE MARITIME EXECUTIVE](#) 2019-09-14 20:41:39

As part of its 75th anniversary celebrations, the American Waterways Operators (AWO) has released a video highlighting the importance of the country's tugboat, towboat and barge industry.

"Barge transportation is the unsung hero of America's transportation system," AWO's Executive Vice President & COO Jennifer Carpenter explains in the video. "Most Americans haven't seen a barge, or a towboat, or a tugboat, but benefit from barge transportation every day."

The AWO has recorded some comments from supporters on its website as part of the anniversary celebrations:

"The tugboat, towboat and barge industry supports more than 300,000 jobs and contributes more than \$30 billion to our nation's economy...I appreciate the American Waterways Operators' decades-long efforts to enhance the safety and efficiency of our water transportation networks in Missouri and across the nation." - Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO)

"Congratulations on 75 years of success. AWO has been great in crafting plans that strengthen safety and transportation on the water. I look forward to continue working with AWO in its efforts to improve our waterways by promoting commerce, safeguarding our water resources and expanding economic opportunities." - Sen. John Boozman (R-AR)

"The tug, towboat, and barge industry could rightfully be considered the backbone of the maritime industry. Directly responsible for more than 50,000 jobs, this industry is critical to our nation's economic security and national security. At a time when the maritime industry is facing great challenges, it is heartening to know that our domestic maritime industry is maintaining its strength and viability." - Rear Admiral Mark Buzby, USN (Ret.), Maritime Administrator

"Happy 75th Birthday AWO!! I was honored to partner with you during my Coast Guard career to improve the safety and environment on our Nation's waterways." - Vice Admiral Jim Card, USCG (Ret.), 21st Coast Guard Vice Commandant

"Congratulations to The American Waterways Operators on 75 years of important advocacy. AWO has been a crucial ally in working to advance policies such as the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act that improve our nation's water infrastructure and transportation systems and I look forward to working together in the years ahead." - Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA)

“The Delaware River is an important freshwater marine habitat, but also a working river that has been the source of livelihoods as long as people have lived in what is now Delaware...Helping to ensure that the Delaware River remains a strong waterway that continues to support middle class jobs and maritime commerce for years to come is important to me, and I have appreciated working with AWO and other organizations over the years to make sure that happens.” - Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE)

“The maritime industry is a vital economic engine for our country and I commend the work of AWO in helping to enact effective public policy such as the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act to ensure effective regulation of vessel discharges while supporting the continued growth of our nation’s essential maritime industry.” - Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD)

“Maritime transportation plays a vital role in transporting Nebraska’s world-class ag and manufacturing products. I appreciated the input and expertise provided by the American Waterways Operators and its members as the Senate worked to pass the Federal Maritime Commission Authorization Act of 2017. This important legislation helps ensure the efficient movement of goods to market.” - Sen. Deb Fischer (R-NE)

“I’d like to congratulate AWO on their 75th anniversary. I’ve been pleased with work with them on important infrastructure and freight movement issues, and count AWO members among my friends. AWO members play an important role in our local community, providing jobs and efficient and safe transportation of goods along our waterways.” - Rep. Daniel Lipinski (D-IL)

“Happy 75 to AWO!! I remember like yesterday when Tom [Allegretti] from AWO and I from the Coast Guard, put a team together to figure out how to arrest the alarming trend of injuries and deaths in the industry. The result of that effort was the Responsible Carrier Program, which set the safety standards that AWO professionals have lived by ever sense. I’m really proud to call Tom a great friend and AWO a great partner. Here’s to 75 more great years!!” - Admiral James Loy, USCG (Ret.), 21st Coast Guard Commandant

“I extend my heartfelt congratulations to AWO for 75 years of incredible service to the industry and unparalleled partnership with the federal government. As a Coast Guard officer, I first had the privilege of working with AWO in the mid-1990s as we jointly tackled the serious challenge of preventing injuries and deaths to mariners working on our inland rivers. I witnessed the dedication and commitment of AWO as they helped identify root causes and then crafted and implemented an innovative industry-wide program to improve safety awareness and build a strong safety culture throughout the fleets. This led to dramatic reductions in mariner casualties. During the more than two decades since, AWO has been a leader, an exemplar and an unwavering partner in the quest for safe, secure and environmentally sound maritime operations. Bravo Zulu, AWO!” - Vice Admiral Peter Neffenger, USCG (Ret.), 29th Coast Guard Vice Commandant

“Congratulations to the American Waterways Operators as they celebrate their 75th birthday! As the representative for the district with the most domestic maritime jobs in the country, I applaud AWO for their leadership on issues that are critical to the American economy and our country’s national security and appreciate their partnership on legislative priorities like enforcing the Jones Act and improving waterway infrastructure.” - Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA)