

Dear Reefing Supporter,

Among the vessels in the Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet (SBRF), but not part of MARAD's inventory, are two former US Coast Guard buoy tenders, *USCGC Iris WABL 395* and *USCGC Planetree WABL 307*. These two vessels would make outstanding artificial reefs if deployed in more restricted, shallower areas, such as near the Avalon, Catalina Island, underwater park, which are impractical for larger ex-Navy vessels. *Iris* and *Planetree* are currently moored within the SBRF awaiting disposal, but are not technically part of the reserve fleet, they still belong to the Coast Guard. We inquired about these vessels and were advised that they may only be transferred by an Act of Congress.

California Ships to Reefs (CSTR) has made a request to California's two Senators, Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, that as our Senators, they add to the current US Coast Guard Reauthorization Act, HR 2838, which has just come to the Senate from the House of Representatives, the donation of these two vessels to California Ships to Reefs, Inc. to be deployed as artificial reefs in appropriate locations off the California coast. Because we have been advised by the Coast Guard that these vessels cannot be disposed of without provision being made for the proper disposal of the toxic substances they contain, we have also requested that funds be provided to carry out this task so that the vessels comply with the provisions of the National Guidance: Best Management Practices for Preparing Vessels Intended to Create Artificial Reefs, adopted in May, 2006. Were these vessels scrapped, the government would be obligated to pay for such disposal by either providing funding or a credit to the scrapper to cover the disposal of the toxics currently aboard them.

Because these ships can be donated directly to an NGO, unlike a MARAD vessel, the process for obtaining them could be much shorter. Because these ships are smaller than *USS Kawishiwi*, they could each serve as a platform on which we can learn and hone our skills as we prepare for the *Kawishiwi*/Dana Point Project while working with the State to obtain her from MARAD.

We are asking that every supporter of the idea of ship-based artificial reefs in California please write a letter to BOTH Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer telling them you support the donation of *USCGC Iris WABL 395* and *USCGC Planetree WABL 307* to CSTR for deployment as artificial reefs in California waters. Because a "snail mail" letter can take up to 8 weeks to reach a federal legislator due to security measures, please fax your letters of support to the senators at the fax numbers listed below. Time is of the essence.

Below is some sample wording. Please do not just cut and paste, put it in your own words, it counts for more than a form letter. If you represent an association, club, company, or government entity that can support the request, please use letterhead. Please send a separate letter to each Senator. CSTR would appreciate receiving copies of any letters sent, and ask that you forward this information to anyone you believe is interested and would want to send letters of support.

Thanks in advance for your assistance and support!

Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
1-202-228-3954

Honorable Barbara Boxer
U.S. Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
1-202-228-3865

Dear Senator (Feinstein) (Boxer),

As a supporter of the ocean and California's economy, (I) (we) wish to express (my) (our) support for the donation of the decommissioned Coast Guard buoy tenders *USCGC Iris WABL 395* and *USCGC Planetree WABL 307* to California Ships to Reefs, Inc. for deployment as artificial reefs in California waters. Ship based artificial reefs create and enhance marine habitat and will stimulate the California economy through diving and fishing tourism. It is (my) (our) understanding that this provision can be added to the United States Coast Guard Reauthorization Act, HR 2838.

If you have any questions or wish further information, please contact Dean A. Rewerts, Vice President Reef Development at (530) 633-4848 or by email at reef_dev@californiashipstoreefs.org.

Sincerely,

Your Name Here