



Commander  
Seventh Coast Guard District  
Miami, FL 33131-3050

22 March 2011

Dear Representative Rivera,

It was a distinct pleasure to meet with you yesterday and thank you again for taking time from your busy schedule to visit the Seventh Coast Guard District Headquarters office. Based on your 25<sup>th</sup> Congressional District's environmentally sensitive coastline boundary and your all-important assignments on the House Committees on Foreign Affairs and Natural Resources, I viewed it important to brief you on Cuba's proposed offshore oil exploration and our contingent planning efforts that are underway were a spill-type incident to ever occur. As I commented yesterday, I am committed to ensuring the Seventh Coast Guard District is at the highest state of readiness possible, were there to ever be a need to respond to a catastrophic spill emanating from Cuban waters. As we focus on Cuba, we are also mindful of the potential for future offshore oil exploration in Bahamian waters.

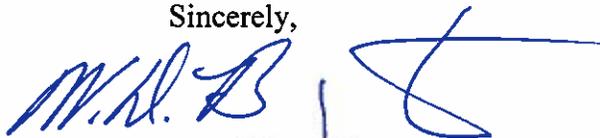
Protecting the marine environment from accidental oil and chemical spills is a key mission of the U.S. Coast Guard. Therefore, the Coast Guard must maintain contingency plans that are ready to be activated in the event incidents occur that may pose a substantial risk to our marine environment. This is consistent with the recommendations made by the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling established through an Executive Order by President Barack Obama. As a result of the proposed North Cuba Basin oil exploration, the Coast Guard is updating plans required to ensure we are ready to address a potential discharge from a drilling rig off the coast of Cuba that could potentially impact U.S. waters. Our engagement in this preparedness effort is far-reaching and therefore, includes a host of federal, state, and private entities.

I am also writing to express my sincere appreciation for your expressing interest in joining the Congressional Coast Guard Caucus when Captain Robert Grant, my Deputy Chief of Staff spoke to you. As he stated, the Caucus provides valuable leadership and critical support to the Coast Guard, ensuring that we are able to deliver the vital services America deserves. You would be an important addition to this group, as the Seventh Coast Guard District has the distinction of having the highest operational tempo of the Coast Guard's nine Districts. Also, the Coast Guard offices located in your Congressional District are important elements of the Coast Guard's presence in the State of Florida. In addition, your House Committee assignments also directly link to the Coast Guard -- Foreign Affairs, as we interact with 34 nations and territories throughout the Caribbean Basin and Natural Resources, due to our responsibilities associated with the protection of natural resources in the maritime domain.

I look forward to working in close partnership with you and your staff on Coast Guard or other maritime-related issues and learning how we might better serve you and your constituents. You can contact me at [REDACTED] or Captain Grant at [REDACTED]. As soon as your schedule will permit, I would welcome the opportunity to host you for a visit to one of our field commands in South Florida, where we can brief you further about our operations. Please know I am also committed to honing our already sharp focus on maritime homeland security, counter-narcotics operation, search and rescue, migrant interdiction and marine safety that directly impacts your District, the State of Florida and the nation.

In closing, please convey to your staff our appreciation for all the assistance they provide, as Captain Grant has mentioned what a pleasure it is working with your staff. Your continued support of the Coast Guard is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



W. D. BAUMGARTNER  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard

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