

July 20, 2004

Honorable Committee Members

It has been over two years since I was given the opportunity of addressing the commission. My purposes remain the same; to maintain and promote multiple use model for submerged cultural resources. Since 2001 a group of like minded individuals and corporations have banded together in an ever growing trade organization known as ShipRex International (www.shiprex.org). We are interested in effecting the way that people around the world interact with submerged cultural resources. Although the commission and its report of are based here in the United States, its findings will no doubt have wide ranging influence throughout the world.

ShipREX believes that the application of Admiralty Law and the Law of Salvage and Finds by Admiralty Courts of competent jurisdiction is the best and most impartial method for administrating issues dealing with submerged cultural resources. We believe that the law of Salvage and Finds and Admiralty law, as they have evolved toward the consideration of archaeological principles, have the potential to augment the proper utilization of this resource and enhance its protection.

ShipREX shall be vigilant toward and seek to have a voice in any legislation and bi- or multilateral agreements between states that would affect the rights of parties with an interest in the utilization of the UCH.

- We are currently reviewing a policy statement by the Dept. of State, 4614 that we feel will effectively eviscerate Admiralty law as applied to this resource and effectively turn over the majority of Colonial period shipwrecks in Untied States waters into the hands of the ex-colonial powers from which they originated

ShipREX seeks to end the negative rhetoric used against the private sector. The use of terminology that distorts or misrepresents our endeavors will be disputed, and measures to correct this misinformation will be taken.

- Perhaps some of you watched Dr. Robert Ballard's "Triumphant" return to the Titanic, if not the book can be preordered from Amazon.com. Dr. Ballard used extremely negative rhetoric regarding all of the private efforts to recover artifacts from the site of the Titanic, completely disregarding the fact that the recovery of the artifacts cost the private sector company millions of dollars and that those efforts have led to one of the most popular museum exhibits of all time.

ShipREX takes a practical and open approach to the marketing of recovered items so they may be returned to the stream of commerce. ShipREX advocates

the position that items, especially those of a highly redundant nature, may be used to generate revenue to defray costs towards ongoing expeditions.

- We also encourage the private sector to use creative models (museum exhibits, intellectual property rights) for resource utilization which offset recovery costs and will not always the sale of artifacts.

ShipREX promotes the merging of the private and the public interest for the benefit of the UCH and mankind's insatiable desire to have access to, learn about, or personally own a maritime antiquity. ShipREX seeks to foster a spirit of cooperation between all parties with an interest in the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

- Certainly one of the best examples of this cooperation is the recent efforts on the Monitor and the CSS. Hunley. Many groups both private and public came together to rescue these historic icons from oblivion. In my home state of Florida we have had a cooperative model in place between the private sector and the State of Florida's Bureau of Archaeological Research for the past twenty years. More recently the private sector has developed a programmatic agreement with the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary whereby the private sector continues its sue of the resource and the resultant research and mapping is handed to the resource managers.

Unfortunately not every ship is a Titanic or a Monitor, vast amounts of public funds will never be spent on the vast majority of these rather anonymous vessels, how best can we preserve a portion of this resource from the imminent dissolution, by working with all of the stakeholders of the resource, no one group has all of the answers to the myriad challenges faced on even one submerged cultural resource let alone the aggregate whole.

Honorable commission members it is my belief that undiscovered, unrecovered, unconserved and unreported cultural resources are no ones cultural resources - I urge the commission to recommend that the multiple use model for this resource be maintained and encouraged.

Respectfully submitted,

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President, ShipRex International