Honoradle John M. Butler
Chairman, Subcommittee on Water Transportation
Senate Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Butler:

Because of another important commitment, I am unablne to be present at the hearings which your Subcommittee is conducting on S. 3610, "To amend Section 216(b) of the Merchant Marine Act, 1936, as amended, to provide for the maintenance of the Merchant Marine Academy". However, I hope that you will have this letter made a part of the record of these hearings.

I am very happy to be a co-sponsor of S. 3610, and I give it my wholehearted support. During my tenure as Governor of New York State I came into intimate contact with the Academy at Kings Point, and from that time through the present day I have been impressed with the quality of training performed at the Academy and with the calibre of cadet midshipmen who each year serve to enlarge this nation's Merchant Marine officers force.

Your Subcommittee certainly does not need to be told of the importance of an effective Merchant Marine. The great wars in which this country has been involved during this century have demonstrated beyond any doubt that one of the great bulwarks of our defense and power is the Merchant Marine. Together with this realization must come an understanding of the vital role of the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point in providing the necessary deck and engineering officers for our merchant ships.

The major purpose of S. 3610 is, of course, to make the Kings Point Academy a permanent Federal institution. I do not believe that the enactment of this bill would add any additional burden on the American taxpayer, since over the years the Federal Government has provided the funds for the maintenance and operation of this Academy. Approximately $1½ to $2 million annually has been voted by Congress and expended by the Federal Government in recent years for this purpose. This sizeable sum has been requested and appropriated with the knowledge of the contribution which the Merchant Marine Academy and its graduates are making to this nation's economic
capability and national defense. The enactment of S. 3610 is a logical and reasonable step in the furtherance of our national goal of a Merchant Marine second to none.

Therefore, I hope very much that this Subcommittee and the full Committee will act quickly to report S. 3610 favorably, so that both Houses of Congress may pass this bill before adjournment.

Yours very sincerely,