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**RE: SL7expo Letter of Support**

To whom it may concern,

I am a Naval Architect who came to the United States in 1976 to University of Michigan as a student. Since completing my engineering education at the University of Michigan, I have been continuously employed in the US maritime industry. It has provided a solid upper middle-class income for me and my family and financial security into retirement. During this period, job opportunities in the industry have been remarkably stable and today the industry suffers from a serious personnel shortage.

During my career I have been continuously aware that the American merchant marine industry has been on the decline, despite the fact that it continues to be the country's most viable path to the middle class.

US public sector and private sector has not realized that promoting this industry is a very viable path to the middle class, as well as extremely vital to National Security.

SL7expo is a group of industry professionals that is engaged in the creation of a national maritime education and exposition center to provide national level support in the promotion of commercial maritime and intermodal commerce, career development, and education.

In particular, SL7expo is investigating the preservation of an SL-7 RO/RO container vessel as the centerpiece of a Smithsonian level national maritime educational center.

I strongly support SL7expo's efforts and urge our federal government to provide the support needed to make this effort a reality and ask the Federal Government to take immediate action in this regard.

With a commitment by the Federal Government to provide the foundation, by donating one of the FSS ships (previously known as SL 7's), which are being downgraded future scrapping, I also pledge my in-kind and financial support in this cooperative effort to strengthen the country and the maritime industry.

Very truly yours,

*Raj Sengupta*

Raj Sengupta,  
Nava Architect