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## Senate

### In Recognition of the United States Coast Guard Cutter *Acacia* and Her Crew

Senator Carl Levin

May 26, 2006

MR. LEVIN: Mr. President it is with great pride that I pay tribute to the United States Coast Guard Cutter *ACACIA* on her 62 years of exceptional service on the Great Lakes. The "Ace of the Great Lakes" will be remembered for her strength, integrity, and rich maritime history. The *ACACIA* is the last of the Coast Guard's classic World War II era 180 foot buoy tenders, and when she is decommissioned on Wednesday, June 7, 2006, it will be the end of an era.

The *ACACIA*, constructed during World War II by the Zenith Dredge Company of Duluth, Minnesota, was launched on September 1, 1944. She was named after the U.S. Lighthouse Service *Acacia*, the only Lighthouse Service vessel sunk during World War II. In the years since her commissioning, the *ACACIA* has served proudly on the Great Lakes, calling Charlevoix, Michigan home port for the last 16 years.

Affectionately known as "The Big A," the *ACACIA*'s primary duties have been the maintenance of more than 210 buoys, lighthouses and other navigational aids in the Great Lakes. Servicing these aids to navigation has required travel from as far south as Calumet Harbor to as far north as Little Bay De Noc. The *ACACIA*'s icebreaking capabilities were also vital to maintaining the safe passage of

coal ships in the channels between Toledo, Ohio and Detroit, Michigan every winter through her participation in Operation Coal Shovel.

In addition, the *ACACIA* has assisted in icebreaking and search and rescue operations on the Great Lakes and throughout the world. Internationally, the *ACACIA* and her crew took part in operation Uphold Democracy in 1994, supporting the Department of Defense in patrolling the coastline of Haiti. Whether working on the Great Lakes or in international waters, the *ACACIA* and her crew have completed all of their missions with class and integrity.

As we pay tribute to the *ACACIA*, I want to recognize the contributions of her crew to her great success. The proud men and women who have served this country aboard the *ACACIA* over the last 62 years are to be saluted for their commitment, hard work, and impressive skill in protecting and securing the safe passage of vessels on the Great Lakes.

On the eve of her decommissioning, I would like to praise the United States Coast Guard Cutter *ACACIA* for her service on the Great Lakes. And I thank the current and former crew of this great ship for their service and commitment. The *ACACIA* will be long remembered for a job well done!