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Subject: Coalition of Hope Excelsior Project

Having reviewed the Excelsior Project Concept documentation and based on my active duty, commercial maritime, and project management experience I strongly endorse Project Excelsior.

My military experience and responsibilities include command of two Amphibious Assault Ships, Fleet Current Operations Officer and Amphibious Group Material/logistics Officer. In these roles I was responsible for planning and execution of operations including Humanitarian and Disaster Relief (HADR) in Central America and the Caribbean AOR, Non-Combat Emergency Operations in Africa, and planning of Logistical Maritime Preposition Force in ports and across unimproved beaches.

The Project Excelsior conversion from Navy combat to a U.S. Flag vessel tailored for HADR operations and compliant to USCG Regulation, IMO and American Bureau of Shipping Standards requires a detailed knowledge which is evidence as a USCG licensed Master Mariner (Deck & Engineering) and USN experience including a pre-commissioning of new construction and reactivation of USS Iowa (BB-61) and Overhaul Coordinator for an 18 month Regular Overhaul in a commercial shipyard.

My evaluation and assessment of project excelsior is that it will provide a scalable, tailorable and unmatched capability for HADR operations. Excelsior will be manned, trained, equipped and supplied specifically for HADR missions. The Concept of Operations include a core capability to be provided and routinely prepositioned in areas of operations conducive to that mission. A reactive response to unexpected natural disasters may be on scene in a maximum of two weeks COH, and partner nations will provide medical, civil engineering, and ship to shore embarked detachments of fly away teams marrying up on site tailored to operational requirements. These will overcome the known shortfalls experienced in military HADR response such as:

- Adapting US military resources to HADR response
- Any perception of threat from a military response
- Ability to accommodate all aspects of HADR operations from medical to infrastructure repair and temporary power, Cargo of food and sustainment goods, and water
- Ability to handle a large refugee and evacuation operations
- Response delay and loss of operational resources to military operational commanders

In addition, Project Excelsior will provide an invaluable strategic resource available to COCOMs in National Emergency or Contingency Operations

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