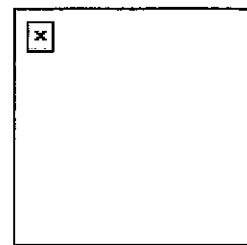


# CONGRESSWOMAN ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

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[www.house.gov/tauscher](http://www.house.gov/tauscher)

## Rep. Ellen Tauscher Introduces Vessel Navigation and Safety Improvement Act

*Bill seeks to prevent accidents similar to November '07 San Francisco Bay oil spill*

**Washington, DC** – Today, Rep. Ellen Tauscher, The senior Northern Californian on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, introduced the Vessel Navigation and Safety Improvement Act. The legislation instructs the Coast Guard to issue regulations that require pilots to carry their own electronic chart devices, known as Portable Pilot Units, with them to provide an extra level of safety over the ship's navigation systems.

“The ecosystem of the Bay and how it affects the overall health of our communities is too important not to require the highest safety standards for navigating large container and tanker ships into San Francisco Bay, especially traffic transporting hazardous material,” said Rep. Ellen Tauscher. “I will not go another day without knowing that we are doing everything possible to prevent these types of accidents. They are costly and environmentally dangerous but, most of all, they are preventable. Putting these devices in the hands of pilots, who provide an important service to our port, will improve navigation and protect our environment.

The legislation also provides flexibility to respect the professional decisions of the pilots. It permits the bar pilot to choose the device best suited for his/her purpose and when to use it. In addition, it allows the Coast Guard to exempt pilots, who operate in locations where the device is not necessary for safe navigation. Examples of currently-used Portable Pilot Units include laptop computers, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and Personal Digital Assistants (PDA).

“Mandatory carriage of Portable Pilot Units is an easy and practical way to improve safety. This requirement will protect our environment against the disastrous effects of ship groundings and oil spills,” said Rep. Tauscher.

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