



**Terry N. Thompson
County Commissioner**

Courthouse, Room 110
225 W. Olive Street
Newport, Oregon 97365
(541) 265-4100
FAX (541) 265-4176

October 24, 2014

Admiral Paul F. Zukunft
Commandant CG-00
USCG Headquarters
2100 2nd Street SW Stop 7000
Washington, DC 20593-7000

Dear Admiral Zukunft,

On behalf of the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners, we support the request of our Congressmen to delay the closure of the Helicopter Air Rescue Facility in Newport, Oregon for six months. We believe that this Air Facility should be a permanent part of the community with funding included in the US Coast Guard budget and we will continue our efforts toward that end goal.

Closing the US Coast Guard Air Facility on December 1, 2014, is unacceptable. This decision, made with only two months, coincides with the first day of commercial Dungeness crabbing season, the most dangerous fishery in our coastal waters. Before any decision to remove the helicopter is finalized, the assumptions underlying the nationwide two-hour response standard need to be specifically evaluated for their effectiveness in our coastal cold waters and against the landward treacherous terrain in which the helicopter operates. We also need to account for the impact the reduction in service will have on response by the remaining North Bend and Astoria Air Stations.

Our local first responders, volunteers and personnel of our fire and law enforcement services, depend upon the US Coast Guard helicopter to assist or undertake the rescue of fishermen, steep terrain loggers and recreationalists who find themselves in trouble in our harsh environments. The helicopter saves lives that are out of reach of these valiant first responders' skills and equipment.

We value the vital work that the US Coast Guard performs on a daily basis and the support it provides our communities and neighbors working and living in dangerous conditions. We also reiterate our strong opposition to the US Coast Guard's decision to close the Helicopter Air Rescue Facility in Newport. Our goal remains keeping a US Coast Guard helicopter in Newport permanently; a delay will provide us an opportunity to continue working with the US Coast Guard to make that a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Terry N. Thompson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

