

Green Coalition Criticizes Cruise Industry Claims to Improve Environmental Performance

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WASHINGTON, March 15 /U.S. Newswire/ - A coalition of 30 environmental groups today criticized a joint initiative announced by the International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL) and Conservation International (CI), purportedly to address the growing problem of cruise ship pollution. The coalition, which includes Oceana, Bluewater Network, Surfrider Foundation, TravelJust, USPIRG, National Environmental Trust and others, released a letter faulting the CI-ICCL proposal for its lack of substance and specific commitments.

According to the letter, "Although the industry says that it is committed to ending cruise ship pollution, without a specific commitment to concrete actions by date certain, the public is left with no other choice than to trust the industry's good intentions. The collaboration appears to be a way for a polluting industry suffering from the spotlight of public disapproval to deflect mounting pressure to adopt better waste treatment systems and stricter standards for discharges."

Cruise ships produce and dump millions of gallons of inadequately treated sewage and wastewater into the oceans every day. Evidence has shown that sewage can contribute to shellfish bed closures, coral reef destruction, the killing of marine mammals, oxygen-free dead zones that decimate native marine species, and harmful algae blooms. For the cost of a can of soda per passenger per day, however, every cruise company could install advanced waste treatment technology fleet-wide within a few years. None have yet committed to do so.

"This effort by the cruise industry is merely an attempt to camouflage a very poor environmental record," said Dana DuBose, Oceana's cruise pollution campaign director. "Rather than providing specifics, the CI-ICCL partnership is serving as a vehicle for the cruise industry's propaganda on this very serious environmental issue. The oceans don't need another blue ribbon panel talking this thing to death, they need the cruise industry to agree to these changes and start making them."

"This tainted partnership constitutes blatant greenwashing," said Teri Shore of Bluewater Network, "We're not sure why the hugely profitable cruise lines are so intent on dumping in the very waters where they generate millions of dollars every day instead of simply cleaning up once and for all."

The letter also urged the industry and cruise companies to show real support for environmental improvements by supporting legislation soon to be introduced in the U.S. Congress which would prohibit dumping near shore and set national effluent limits for sewage and wastewater.

Coalition members responsible for the letter include Oceana; Bluewater Network; Surfrider Foundation; US PIRG; Ocean Conservation Society; National Environmental Trust; Waterkeeper Alliance; Ocean Advocates; TravelJust; Friends of Casco Bay; Campaign to Safeguard

America's Waters; Earth Island Institute; San Diego BayKeeper; Heal the Bay; Ocean Conservation Society; Georgia Straight Alliance; Citizen Action/Illinois; Livable Old Town, Key West; KAHEA: The Hawaiian-Environmental Alliance; New Hampshire Global Warming Campaign; Responsible Cruising in Alaska; Eco-Link; Algalita Marine Research Foundation; Blue Dolphin Alliance, Inc; Friends of the Sea Otter; Save Our Shores, Santa Cruz; Long Beach Greens; WashPIRG; South Carolina Coastal Conservation League; Environment California

To read the letter in full, please visit:

<http://www.stopcruisepollution.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=page&pageID=1250>.

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