

THE WHITE HOUSE

July 2, 2009

Admiral Thad W. Allen
Commandant of the United States Coast Guard
2100 Second Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20593

Dear Admiral Allen:

I am honored to serve as sponsor of the United States Coast Guard cutter *Stratton*. This vessel will embody the strength of today's military and the enduring courage of our Coast Guardsmen and women.

The brave service of the men and women of the United States Coast Guard is vital to our Nation's security and the daily safety of our families. They dedicate their lives to securing our coasts, ports, and waterways, assisting mariners in distress, enforcing our laws, protecting our environment, and saving the lives of ordinary men, women and children every day. They are also in harm's way and defending our Nation overseas. Our Nation owes the United States Coast Guard a deep debt of gratitude.

I am especially pleased that the cutter's namesake is Captain Dorothy Stratton, a pioneer in our Nation's military history. During World War II, Captain Stratton was the first woman accepted into the Coast Guard Women's Reserve. She later served as its first Director and became the first woman accepted as a commissioned officer in Coast Guard history. All in all, more than 10,000 women looked to Captain Stratton for leadership and guidance. She is a source of inspiration for countless women in uniform and for young women and girls who may one day serve in our Nation's Armed Forces because of her example. Now, all Americans can look to the cutter named in her honor as a living embodiment of her service and strength.

May God bless the *Stratton* and the servicewomen and men who serve on her and may God bless the United States of America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Obama". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.