

**SOURCE: Operation Sail, Inc.**



Apr 22, 2010 10:15 ET

## **OpSail 2012 Launched During Senate Reception**

### **OpSail and United States Navy Kick Off Commemorative Bicentennial of 'The Star-Spangled Banner' and The War of 1812**

WASHINGTON, DC--(Marketwire - April 22, 2010) - Operation Sail (OpSail) and the United States Navy hosted a kick-off reception, sponsored by Senator Chris Dodd of Connecticut, in the Kennedy Caucus Room of the Russell Senate Office Building, announcing their partnership for the 2012 bicentennial celebrations to commemorate the '*Star-Spangled Banner*' and The War of 1812 in port cities along the East Coast.

"OpSail provides us with a unique opportunity to examine a significant aspect of our own history. Over the years, OpSail has celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the centennial of the Statue of Liberty, the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's landing in America, and the dawning of a new millennium," said Dodd. "This year, we will once again celebrate the courage of our sailors and the majesty of our naval fleet, sharing memories with our families and children as we watch these majestic tall ships."

"These events will include key historical ports and bring people together to celebrate our history," said Chris O'Brien, Executive Director of OpSail. "We will give spectators the opportunity to witness tall ships and warships from around the world and further our goal of preserving our maritime heritage."



*Chris O'Brien, Executive Director of OpSail delivers remarks during a commemoration reception to recognize the bicentennial of the War of 1812 as Jose Fuentes, left, Chairman of the Board for Operation Sail; Sen. Christopher Dodd; and Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert look on. (Andrew Snow)*

"OpSail is honored to mark the fifth time in nearly 50 years that we have joined with the U.S. Navy in an effort to bring Navies of the world together, to recognize our common bond in Sail and the pursuit of diplomacy," said José Fuentes, Chairman of OpSail.

"Working in conjunction with OpSail enables the U.S. Navy to showcase its warships and the men and women that currently serve our country," said Admiral Greenert, Vice Chief of Naval Operations. "By infusing our fleet with the flotilla of tall ships, we bring America's historic beginnings into the context of a new millennium."

"As Americans, it is our duty to not only celebrate, but to also share our maritime heritage with the youth of this great nation," said Captain Pat Burns. "OpSail 2012 will continue a tradition of inspiring young men and women to grow into the leaders of tomorrow, for generations to come."

Previous OpSail events contributed to the economy of participating port cities through increased hotel bookings and restaurant reservations, sales and construction of new infrastructure, while attracting national and international media.

OpSail International Naval Review 2000 showcased 61 ships from 14 countries and drew more than ten million people to the cities of Baltimore, New York and New London. OpSail research estimates that six million people could participate in the OpSail 2012 kick-off event in New York Harbor, which in 2000 generated a positive economic impact of approximately \$592 million.

Possible port cities include, but are not limited to: New York City, Boston, Norfolk, Baltimore, New London, New Orleans and Annapolis. To learn more, please visit the OpSail Web site at [www.opsail.org](http://www.opsail.org).

#### **About Operation Sail, Inc.**

Operation Sail, Inc. is a non-profit organization established in 1961 with the endorsement of President John F. Kennedy. Backed by a congressional resolution, its mission is to advance sail training and promote goodwill among nations. To date, it has held five international events -- in 1964, 1976, 1986, 1992, and 2000 -- each tied to a landmark historical event.

#### **About the United States Navy**

The U.S. Navy is the sea branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. The mission of the Navy is to maintain, train and equip combat-ready Naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas.

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