



## RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

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PETITION No.: **421-02880**

BY: **MRS. BLOCK (CARLTON TRAIL-EAGLE CREEK)**

DATE: **NOVEMBER 5, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE CATHERINE MCKENNA**

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Response by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

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SUBJECT

**Warships**

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**ORIGINAL TEXT**

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**REPLY**

The Government of Canada would like to thank the petitioners for the submission of this petition.

Ocean war graves deserve respect and recognition as the final resting place of people who served in or under Canada's military and foreign military forces. The Government appreciates the petitioners' concerns and acknowledges that there is a regulatory gap with respect to the protection of ocean war graves.

The Parks Canada Agency and the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, with support from Transport Canada and other relevant departments, are working together to identify an appropriate protection framework for the final resting places of those who lost their lives serving their country. The Government is open to supporting an amendment to Bill C-64 – the proposed *Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act* – to allow existing legislative regulation-making authority for the protection of wrecks that have heritage value to be applied to wrecks of vessels or aircraft of Canadian military forces and of foreign military forces. This proposed regulatory authority could form the basis for a future regulatory protection framework for military wrecks, including those that may contain the remains of military personnel, in a manner consistent with international law.

In developing a regulatory framework, consideration would be given to the concerns raised by the petitioners, including the need for appropriate sanctions and penalties, consideration for the inclusion of different types of military vessels (e.g., merchant ships lost in military service), and the protection of ocean war graves.

Further, the Government of Canada agrees that, where appropriate, steps will be taken to request protection of the wrecks of any Canadian military vessel in foreign waters, for which the location is known and which may or may not contain the remains of Canadian military personnel, to the full extent permitted under the domestic laws of the countries in whose waters the wrecks are located and in a manner consistent with international law. The Department of National Defence will continue to work with Global Affairs Canada to request this protection through diplomatic channels on a case by case basis.