

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1845

To provide for pay and allowances for members of the Coast Guard during a funding gap, to provide full funding to address the shoreside facility maintenance and recapitalization backlog of the Coast Guard, and to diversify the Coast Guard, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 26, 2021

Mr. WICKER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To provide for pay and allowances for members of the Coast Guard during a funding gap, to provide full funding to address the shoreside facility maintenance and recapitalization backlog of the Coast Guard, and to diversify the Coast Guard, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Unwavering Support
5 for our Coast Guard Act” or the “USCG Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) The Coast Guard saves individuals in peril,
2 thwarts illicit and coercive maritime activities, and
3 fosters economic prosperity and environmental stew-
4 ardship.

5 (2) The Coast Guard is at all times a branch
6 of the Armed Forces of the United States.

7 (3) Additionally, the Coast Guard is a Federal
8 law enforcement agency, a regulatory body, a first
9 responder, and a member of the United States intel-
10 ligence community.

11 (4) With its unique mission set and authorities,
12 the Coast Guard has a key role in addressing emerg-
13 ing national priorities in the United States and
14 across the globe.

15 (5) The Coast Guard is deployed worldwide.
16 The white-hull diplomacy of the Coast Guard is es-
17 sential to United States security.

18 (6) Domestically, the Coast Guard keeps the
19 waterways of the United States open and commerce
20 moving smoothly by ensuring marine safety and
21 maintaining aids to navigation.

22 (7) Last year, the Coast Guard responded to
23 16,845 search and rescue cases and saved 4,286
24 lives.

1 (8) The Coast Guard has admirably performed
 2 its missions with a fleet of aging vessels, aircraft,
 3 and facilities. The Coast Guard deserves Congress’s
 4 strong and full support for the recapitalization of its
 5 assets.

6 **SEC. 3. PAY AND ALLOWANCES FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF**
 7 **THE COAST GUARD DURING FUNDING GAP.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—During a funding gap, the Sec-
 9 retary of the Treasury shall make available to the Sec-
 10 retary of Homeland Security, out of any amounts in the
 11 general fund of the Treasury not otherwise appropriated,
 12 such amounts as the Secretary of Homeland Security de-
 13 termines to be necessary to continue to provide, without
 14 interruption, pay and allowances to members of the Coast
 15 Guard, including reserve components thereof, who perform
 16 active service during the funding gap.

17 (b) FUNDING GAP DEFINED.—In this section, the
 18 term “funding gap” means any period after the beginning
 19 of a fiscal year for which interim or full-year appropria-
 20 tions for the personnel accounts of the Coast Guard have
 21 not been enacted.

22 **SEC. 4. FULL FUNDING FOR SHORESIDE FACILITY MAINTENANCE AND RECAPITALIZATION.**
 23

24 (a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It shall be the policy
 25 of the United States to provide, on the earliest date prac-

1 ticable, full funding to address the shoreside facility main-
 2 tenance and recapitalization backlog of the Coast Guard.

3 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
 4 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Home-
 5 land Security to eliminate the shoreside facility mainte-
 6 nance and recapitalization backlog of the Coast Guard
 7 \$2,600,000,000 for fiscal years 2022 through 2030.

8 **SEC. 5. FLEET MIX ANALYSIS.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant of the Coast
 10 Guard (referred to in this Act as the “Commandant”)
 11 shall conduct an updated fleet mix analysis that provides
 12 for a fleet mix sufficient, as determined by the Com-
 13 mandant—

14 (1) to carry out—

15 (A) the missions of the Coast Guard; and

16 (B) emerging mission requirements; and

17 (2) to address—

18 (A) national security threats; and

19 (B) the global deployment of the Coast
 20 Guard to counter great power competitors.

21 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
 22 of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall sub-
 23 mit to Congress a report on the results of the updated
 24 fleet mix analysis required by subsection (a).

1 **SEC. 6. SHORE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PLAN.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant shall develop
3 an updated shore infrastructure investment plan that in-
4 cludes—

5 (1) the construction of additional facilities to
6 accommodate the updated fleet mix described in sec-
7 tion 5(a);

8 (2) improvements necessary to ensure that ex-
9 isting facilities meet requirements and remain oper-
10 ational for the lifespan of such fleet mix, including
11 necessary improvements to information technology
12 infrastructure;

13 (3) a timeline for the construction and improve-
14 ment of the facilities described in paragraphs (1)
15 and (2); and

16 (4) a cost estimate for construction and life-
17 cycle support of such facilities, including for nec-
18 essary personnel.

19 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
20 on which the report under section 5(b) is submitted, the
21 Commandant shall submit to Congress a report on the
22 plan required by subsection (a).

23 **SEC. 7. PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM TO DIVERSIFY THE COAST**
24 **GUARD.**

25 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Commandant shall es-
26 tablish a program for the purpose of increasing the num-

1 ber of underrepresented minorities in the enlisted ranks
2 of the Coast Guard.

3 (b) PARTNERSHIPS.—In carrying out the program es-
4 tablished under subsection (a), the Commandant shall—

5 (1) seek to enter into 1 or more partnerships
6 with eligible entities—

7 (A) to increase the visibility of Coast
8 Guard careers;

9 (B) to promote curriculum development—

10 (i) to enable acceptance into the Coast
11 Guard; and

12 (ii) to improve success on relevant
13 exams, such as the Armed Services Voca-
14 tional Aptitude Battery; and

15 (C) to provide mentoring for students en-
16 tering and beginning Coast Guard careers; and

17 (2) enter into a partnership with an existing
18 Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps for the pur-
19 pose of promoting Coast Guard careers.

20 (c) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION DEFINED.—In this sec-
21 tion, the term “eligible institution” means—

22 (1) an institution of higher education (as de-
23 fined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of
24 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001));

1 (2) an institution that provides a level of edu-
2 cational attainment that is less than a bachelor's de-
3 gree;

4 (3) a part B institution (as defined in section
5 322 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
6 U.S.C. 1061));

7 (4) a Tribal College or University (as defined in
8 section 316(b) of that Act (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)));

9 (5) a Hispanic-serving institution (as defined in
10 section 502 of that Act (20 U.S.C. 1101a));

11 (6) an Alaska Native-serving institution or a
12 Native Hawaiian-serving institution (as defined in
13 section 317(b) of that Act (20 U.S.C. 1059d(b)));

14 (7) a Predominantly Black institution (as de-
15 fined in section 371(c) of that Act (20 U.S.C.
16 1071q(c)));

17 (8) an Asian American and Native American
18 Pacific Islander-serving institution (as defined in
19 such section); and

20 (9) a Native American-serving nontribal institu-
21 tion (as defined in such section).

22 **SEC. 8. COAST GUARD YARD RESILIENCY.**

23 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
24 ings:

1 (1) For over a century, Coast Guard vessels
2 have been built, repaired, and renovated in the Coast
3 Guard Yard (referred to in this section as the
4 “Yard”) in Baltimore, Maryland.

5 (2) As 1 of only 5 remaining public shipyards
6 in the United States, the Yard provides a unique ca-
7 pability to support the Coast Guard and the national
8 fleet, including the National Oceanic and Atmos-
9 pheric Administration, the Navy, the Army, and
10 other Government agencies.

11 (3) The Yard is an essential component of the
12 core industrial base and fleet support operations of
13 the Coast Guard, and its primary mission is to ren-
14 ovate, maintain, and repair Coast Guard vessels.

15 (4) The Coast Guard is in the midst of recapiti-
16 talizing its surface fleet by replacing smaller vessels
17 with larger, more capable assets. Until recently, the
18 Yard provided the Coast Guard with the organic ca-
19 pacity to service every vessel in the Coast Guard
20 fleet, except polar icebreakers.

21 (5) With the acquisition of the National Secu-
22 rity Cutter and the projected acquisition of the Off-
23 shore Patrol Cutter, the Coast Guard will no longer
24 have the organic capacity to service every vessel in
25 the Coast Guard fleet.

1 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
2 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Home-
3 land Security to improve the infrastructure of the Coast
4 Guard public shipyard \$350,000,000.

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