



January 9, 2019

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
United States House of Representatives
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio,

As the former senior enlisted leaders of the U.S. Coast Guard, we join in with the Sea Service Family Foundation, along with numerous military service organizations in applauding you and your congressional colleagues for supporting proposed legislation that would ensure entitled pay for our all of our Coast Guard members, active duty, reserve, retired and civilians would not be disrupted in the event of a government shutdown. Approval of this legislation would also bring parity with the Department of Defense military and civilian personnel.

Our Coast Guard personnel carry out an expansive multi-mission responsibility as it relates to both national and homeland security. This current government shutdown and any such future situations of this nature brings a severe hardship on our active duty members, who work in the same capacity as their military counterparts of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force.

In addition, this government shutdown will pose an extreme hardship on Coast Guard and other social services relief programs such as the Coast Guard Mutual Assistance, which by its charter is available to assist personnel for financial needs under circumstances of this nature.

While this is a fix for the current shutdown, further legislation needs to be written and introduced to ensure all branches of the military are protected from losing pay in the event of a shutdown going forward.

We greatly appreciate your support in this matter.

Sincerely,

Hollis B. Stephens, *3rd Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard*
Carl W. Constantine, *4th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard*
Robert J. Lloyd, *6th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard*
Eric A. Trent, *7th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard*
Vincent W. Patton III, *8th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard*
Frank A. Welch, *9th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard*
Charles W. Bowen, *10th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard*
Michael P. Leavitt, *11th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard*
Steven W. Cantrell, *12th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard*