



December 27, 2018

The Honorable John Thune
United States Senate
511 Dirksen Senate Hoffice Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Thune,

As the former senior enlisted leaders of the U.S. Coast Guard, we join in with the Sea Service Family Foundation, along with several military service organizations in asking your cooperation in reintroducing Senate Bill 545, *Pay Our Coast Guard Act*. This act was introduced in the 114th Congress, in February 2015 providing legislation to make continuous appropriations for Coast Guard pay in the event of a government shutdown. This particular proposed legislation would 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.

Most importantly – reintroducing this Senate Bill is all about fairness. Fairness in keeping the U.S. Coast Guard in the same capacity of all other military services. Legislation is in place to protect DoD military personnel and should also apply the U.S. Coast Guard.

We greatly appreciate your support in this matter.

Sincerely,

Hollis B. Stephens, 3rd 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

Charles W. Bowen, 10th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Steven W. Cantrell, 12th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard