

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 26, 2019

The Honorable Roger Wicker  
Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on  
Commerce, Science, & Transportation  
512 Dirksen Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Ranking Member  
United States Senate Committee on  
Commerce, Science, & Transportation  
512 Dirksen Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Chairman  
United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Ranking Member  
United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Wicker and DeFazio, and Ranking Members Cantwell and Graves:

As you complete conference negotiations on the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2019, we write to urge you ensure that the final bill provides for the continued pay of military members of the Coast Guard during government shutdowns.

The Coast Guard delivers critical national security, safety, environmental, and commerce-enabling services year-round, averaging 45 search and rescue operations and more than 1,000 pounds of illegal drugs interdicted at sea each day. The men and women of our nation's Coast Guard perform a truly staggering range of missions on a round-the-clock basis, truly living up to the service's motto, *Semper Paratus*, or "Always Ready."

In the last several years, the Coast Guard's contributions have only grown, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. The deployment of several Coast Guard cutters to the region this year, including the USCGC *Bertholf*, which in May joined the USS *Curtis Wilbur* (DDG 54) in a transit operation in the Taiwan Strait, has shown the versatility of these platforms as well as their ability to seamlessly integrate with our Navy team. In addition, the implications for an increasingly open Arctic mean that the Coast Guard, as the only service currently operating icebreaking vessels, will likely have an expanded role in providing vital support to U.S. economic and security ventures there.

Despite the obvious criticality of the work of the Coast Guard, they remain at risk during partial government shutdowns that impact the Department of Homeland Security, as the nation vividly witnessed earlier this year. Section 221 of the Senate-passed bill would prevent a potential repeat of this situation by mandating that in the event of an expiration of appropriations for DHS, members of the Coast Guard would continue receiving their pay on parity with the other

branches of our armed services. This provision would ensure retirees and survivors receive the payments they rely on to meet their daily needs as well. With more than 180 cosponsors of H.R. 367, the Pay Our Coast Guard Parity Act of 2019, it is clear that the issue has broad bipartisan support here in the House as well.

We believe our Coast Guardsmen and women more than deserve the parity this section would provide, and encourage you to retain either the language of section 221 or H.R. 367 in your final conferenced version on behalf of the selfless sacrifice of these individuals and their families.


Thank you, as always, for your work in support of the Coast Guard and all the other important programs under your jurisdiction. Thank you for your consideration of this request.


Sincerely,


  
JOE COURTNEY  
Member of Congress

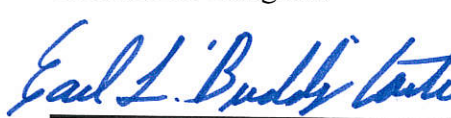
  
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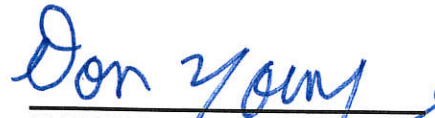
  
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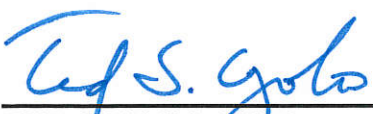
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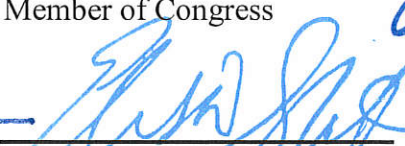
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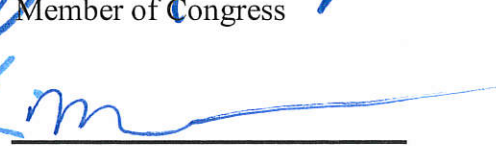
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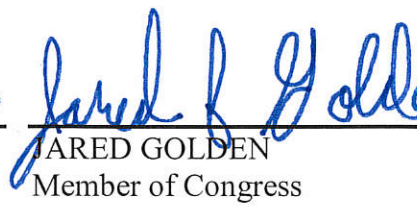
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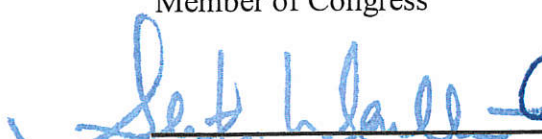


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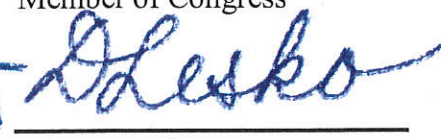
  
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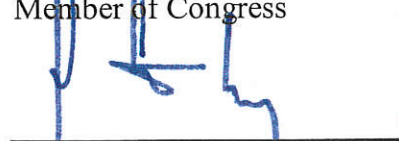
  
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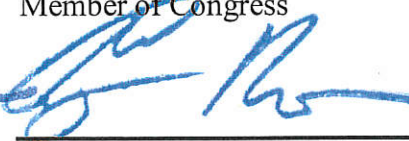
  
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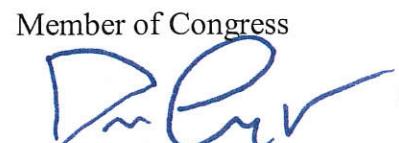
  
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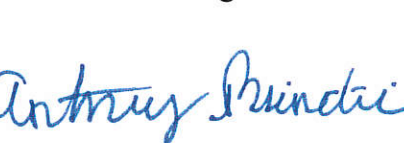
  
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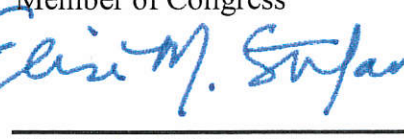
  
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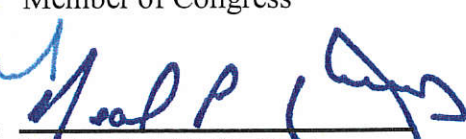
  
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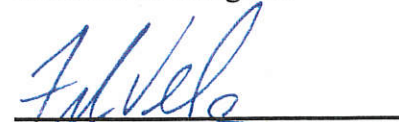
  
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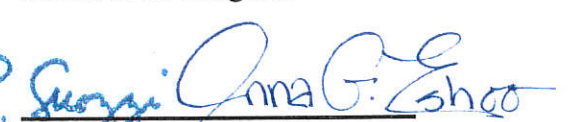
  
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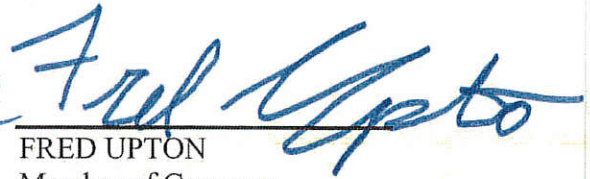




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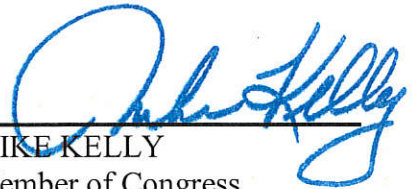
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