



Commandant  
United States Coast Guard

2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20593-7000  
Staff Symbol: CG-0921  
Phone: 202 372-4411  
Fax: 202 372-8300

**TESTIMONY OF  
ADMIRAL THOMAS ALLAN  
VICE COMMANDANT, U.S. COAST GUARD**

**ON  
“FUNDING LAPSE AND SECURITY GAPS: ASSESSING THE HARMFUL IMPACTS  
OF THE DHS SHUTDOWN ON AMERICANS”**

**BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**

**MARCH 25, 2026**

Chairman Garbarino, Ranking Member Thompson, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify on the severe impacts the current government shutdown is having on the United States Coast Guard. As of today, we are 39 days into the current lapse in appropriations. For the Coast Guard, this marks the third shutdown of this fiscal year. In total, for 85 of the last 176 days—for nearly half the year our Service has been without the funding necessary to operate and pay our people.

As a vital instrument of national power, the Coast Guard controls, secures, and defends the U.S. border and maritime approaches, facilitates the safe and secure flow of commerce that is vital to economic prosperity, and responds to crises that may come without warning. As a proud member of the Department of Homeland Security and the only Armed Force within the Department, every action the Coast Guard takes is dedicated to protecting our Nation. The American people depend on the Coast Guard, and the Service provides a remarkable return on investment—but only with consistent and predictable appropriations.

Under the lapse in appropriations, the Coast Guard suspended all missions except those for national security or the protection of life and property. While missions including law enforcement, national defense, and emergency response continue, this funding lapse is causing severe and lasting consequences for the Coast Guard's workforce, operational readiness, and long-term capabilities.

Most importantly, this lapse is creating profound and unacceptable financial strain for our people. While our military members, thankfully, received their pay up to this point, we are operating under the grim uncertainty of whether we can make the next payroll. The reality of missing paychecks creates significant financial hardship for service members and their families and erodes the sacred trust our men and women have in the Nation they serve.

For our dedicated civilian workforce, the shutdown creates an immediate and devastating impact. Our civilian personnel already missed several paychecks, leaving them without the resources needed to pay bills and support their families. This includes the nearly 75% of our civilian specialists—experts in finance, contracting, and information technology—who are furloughed. Their skills are critical and cannot be backfilled by our military crews. For our entire workforce,

this financial strain and uncertainty cripples morale and directly harms our ability to recruit and retain the talented Americans we need to meet growing demands.

The work our Coast Guard crews perform every day is dangerous and challenging. They deserve the certainty that they and their families will be cared for. A Gunner's Mate pursuing a drug smuggling vessel should not have to wonder if their family will be able to pay rent in the midst of a dangerous interdiction. The Aviation Survival Technician deploying from a helicopter into treacherous seas should not have to worry if their family can buy groceries that week. These jobs require dedication, focus, and attention to detail, and any distraction puts the member, mission, crew, and unit at risk. While military pay continued thus far, this shutdown creates other severe financial burdens. Our deployed crews are accumulating thousands of dollars in official expenses on their government travel cards with no way to be reimbursed. This mounting, personal debt is an unacceptable burden, and no service member should be forced to finance government operations out of their own pocket.

This shutdown is also eroding mission readiness by crippling our ability to meet our contractual obligations. We are unable to pay our contractors and vendors—including the many small businesses that rely on timely payment to survive. This failure creates a series of escalating risks to our operations. Each day the shutdown continues, we move closer to a tipping point. We face the imminent danger of widespread utility shutoffs at our bases and the refusal of fuel deliveries, which would sideline our cutters and aircraft from executing critical national security missions. The suspension of payments for cloud and satellite communications services threatens to sever vital command-and-control links. At our maintenance depot locations, the inability to pay for parts and services risks triggering stop-work orders from our shipyard partners, which would exacerbate our existing significant maintenance backlog. As we approach the April 1 start date for a new base security contract period, we face the possibility that vendors will be unwilling to commit to securing our facilities without a funded contract, leaving our installations vulnerable.

We ceased activities that do not protect the safety of human life or property from imminent danger, including routine patrols, fisheries enforcement, maintenance of aids to navigation, and commercial vessel safety inspections. The National Maritime Center remains closed, halting the issuance of credentials for our nation's merchant mariners. As of today, we project that over 15,000 Merchant Mariner Credential applications are stalled in processing—a backlog that grows by approximately 350 applications every single day this shutdown continues. The ripple effects are causing delays in vessel inspections and financing that cost the U.S. economy billions of dollars each week and increase costs for all Americans.

The Coast Guard will continue to serve, because that is what our people have sworn to do. But our crews should never question whether the nation they protect will stand behind them and their families. Ensuring stable funding for the Department of Homeland Security is not simply a budgetary matter, it is a matter of trust, readiness, and national security. Our service members will keep their watch. We ask only that Congress ensure they are supported while they do so. Thank you, and *Semper Paratus*.