

**TESTIMONY OF**

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

**ON**

**“FORCE DESIGN OR FORCE IN DECLINE: REVIEWING READINESS”**

**BEFORE THE  
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION**

**March 17, 2026**

Chairman Ezell, Ranking Member Carbajal, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today and for your continued support and advocacy for the United States Coast Guard. I look forward to discussing how the Coast Guard is executing the historic capital investment provided by Congress to deliver results for the American people we serve.

The Coast Guard is a vital instrument of national power in greater demand now more than ever before. At home and abroad, our brave men and women conduct operations to safeguard the American people and our way of life, delivering value to the Nation every day by performing our statutory missions. We control, secure, and defend the U.S. border and maritime approaches, facilitate the safe and secure flow of commerce that is vital to America’s economic prosperity, and successfully respond to emergent crises and contingencies.

The Coast Guard is implementing bold new action to address severe readiness challenges caused by decades of underinvestment. Through Force Design 2028 and America’s nearly \$25 billion investment in the Service, we are undertaking the most significant modernization and recapitalization in at least a century to renew the Coast Guard and become a more agile, capable, and responsive fighting force.

To improve operational readiness, the Coast Guard is converting reconciliation funds into capabilities. We thank the Subcommittee for your advocacy and support in delivering this historic investment and for the legislative relief Congress provided to waive certain pre-acquisition requirements, allowing our acquisition professionals to accelerate some programs by up to two years.

With this investment, legislative relief, and sweeping organizational changes made through Force Design 2028, we are moving with unprecedented speed, obligating over \$8 billion in the first nine months to buy new cutters, aircraft, technology, and shore infrastructure.

These investments include awarding contracts for up to 11 Arctic Security Cutters, at least 2 Polar Security Cutters, 8 fixed wing aircraft, 34 unmanned vehicles, 10 Fast Response Cutters, and Coastal Sentinel – a new information technology system that will enhance maritime domain dominance and enable the Service to better detect, prevent, and respond to threats before they reach U.S. shores.

Building on this momentum, we will obligate more than \$18 billion of the reconciliation funding by the end of this fiscal year. This investment begins the long-overdue recapitalization of our more than 50-year-old light and medium icebreakers and Waterways Commerce Cutters, expands our fleet of medium-range helicopters, and modernizes our force with 21st-century capabilities such as new long-range unmanned aircraft systems.

We will invest in critical infrastructure, including new cutter homeports, hangars, aids to navigation systems, and shoreside commands. At the same time, we are investing nearly \$900 million to reduce depot-maintenance backlogs and procure the parts and supplies needed to keep our operators and assets on the front lines longer.

However, this investment represents a down payment – not the finish line. Coast Guard operations depend on more than cutters, aircraft, and boats. They require a robust network of shore infrastructure and a ready workforce to sustain them. Piers, hangars, homeports, and operational facilities ensure assets can be berthed, maintained, and deployed rapidly when missions demand.

Just as critical are investments in the support systems that sustain Coast Guard men and women, and their families, including housing, medical services, and childcare that allow the workforce to be focused and mission ready. Behind every operational asset are highly trained Coast Guard members such as operators, engineers, and support staff who are prepared to respond at a moment's notice.

Our Coast Guard men and women, military and civilians, are our greatest strength. Service readiness begins with the readiness of our crews and their families. Without them, none of our missions are possible. Expanding our military workforce by 15,000 members is essential to enabling readiness, operating the expanded fleet you funded through reconciliation, and deploying new capabilities required to meet growing demands and evolving threats.

As set forth in more detail in the President's Budget, sustaining these capabilities requires reliable annual appropriations and increased funding levels for Operations & Support that are commensurate with the demands of operating a global maritime force. Together, modern shore infrastructure, a supported workforce, and sustained investment ensure the Coast Guard can remain ready to deliver the best value to our great Nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. With the continued support of this Subcommittee and Congress, the Coast Guard will remain *Semper Paratus* - Always Ready.