

**The Honorable John Carter  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Committee on Appropriations**

**Coast Guard FY 2015 Budget Request**

**Witness:  
Admiral Robert Papp, Commandant**

**10:00 AM | Wednesday | March 12, 2014 | 2362-A RHOB**

**Opening Statement As Prepared**

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Subcommittee will come to order –

Admiral, thank you testifying before us today. As you prepare to retire from the Coast Guard this May, no one can doubt your dedication to service...or that of the active duty military and civilians that you command. Thank you for your service... and for what is likely your last appearance before this Subcommittee.

But, before we wish you fair winds and following seas, we must address your budget request for this fiscal year ....a proposal that:

- Cuts almost 750 active duty full time positions;
- Decommissions two High Endurance Cutters, eight patrol boats and numerous air assets;
- Reduces operational flight hours and cutter hours; and
- Squanders \$30 million dollars in savings per year by dragging out the acquisition of the Fast Response Cutters.

So, instead of supporting frontline operations or supporting mission requirements, this budget submission severely diminishes current, near-term, and future capabilities.

Admiral, this is a budget that we cannot accept. We fully understand the challenge you faced in balancing a shrinking budget while also trying to take care of Coast Guard families, sustaining operations with aging assets, and recapitalizing for the future. This is no small task in today's fiscal environment.

But the Congress – and this Subcommittee in particular – has never supported a plan that so bluntly guts operational capabilities...and that so clearly increases our Nation's vulnerability to maritime risks, including more illegal drugs.

Admiral, we know you have a tough job – that is precisely why we are relying upon you to explain how this budget meets our Nation's needs for both fiscal discipline and robust security – and perhaps more importantly, how it doesn't.

Before I turn to the Admiral for his statement, let me first recognize the distinguished Ranking Member for any remarks he wishes to make.

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