



Chairman John Carter

*Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Committee on Appropriations*

Opening Statement:
Coast Guard FY 2019 Priorities

Witness:
Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, Commandant

10:00 AM | Tuesday | April 17, 2018 | Rayburn 2359

Subcommittee will come to order –

Admiral Zukunft, thank you for being here this morning. Today, we look forward to getting your perspective on the Coast Guard’s priorities and requirements.

The Coast Guard mission is both wide ranging and unique. It is a military force that protects us not only in the waters of the Continental United States, but also in the Arctic and Southwest Asia. It is a federal law enforcement agency, fighting transnational crime here and abroad. It is a regulatory agency, ensuring the safety and security of our nation’s ports and waterways, facilitating over \$4 trillion of trade and commerce. And, it is a first responder, saving over 12,000 lives during the historic hurricane season last year. The challenges of this diverse mission set requires a force that is robust, agile, and well-equipped.

Congress provided substantial funding for the Coast Guard in the last hurricane supplemental and in our FY 2018 omnibus appropriations bill. The Committee is eager to hear from you on how you will execute these resources, and how you intend to sustain these efforts, as well as your priorities and concerns.

In FY 2018, the Coast Guard added a fifth vessel to its modernization program – the Waterways Commerce Cutter. Sustaining five major acquisition programs will be a challenge. I am especially interested in hearing your plans to continue to recapitalize the Coast Guard’s ice breaker fleet, the inland waterways cutters, and long range reconnaissance aircraft.

The FY 2019 budget addresses many important Coast Guard requirements. The fiscal reality is that every agency must operate in a constrained resource environment but few can match the Coast Guard’s consistently excellent

performance - maintaining a quality force, sustaining operations with aging assets, recapitalizing for the future, and taking care of Coast Guard families. As always, my goal is to ensure that we support the most critical programs with the funds that are needed for this fiscal year. Your testimony today will help guide this Committee in making some tough decisions.

Admiral, I'm not sure everyone here is aware, but this is your last hearing before this subcommittee as Commandant of the Coast Guard. On behalf of my fellow Members, let me say thank you for your leadership these past four years, and even more so, thank you for your four decades of service to our country.

Before I turn to the Admiral for his statement, the text of which will be included in the record, let me first recognize our distinguished Ranking Member, Ms. Roybal Allard, for any remarks she wishes to make.

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