

the **COAST GUARD** AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2015



The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015 is bipartisan legislation that supports and strengthens the United States Coast Guard, one of our Nation's five armed services, in its critical missions to save lives, safeguard our shores, and protect living marine resources. This two-year authorization also addresses our maritime transportation system, which is essential to our economy and instrumental to national security.

The bill reauthorizes the Coast Guard and the Federal Maritime Commission for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, and includes reforms to Coast Guard authorities and laws governing shipping and navigation.

Supporting and Strengthening the Coast Guard:

Authorizes the Coast Guard for Fiscal Year 2016 and 2017: Ensures the Service has the resources it needs to successfully conduct its critical missions.

Supports Coast Guard Servicemembers: Supporting our men and women serving in the Coast Guard is a top priority. This bill ensures Coast Guard officers and enlisted servicemembers receive access to the same benefits as their counterparts in the Department of Defense.

Recapitalizes Aging Coast Guard Assets: It is essential to ensure the Coast Guard has the tools to carry out its important missions. This legislation authorizes funding at a level that will keep critically needed new aircraft, vessels, and related technology on schedule and on budget.

Improving Mission Effectiveness:

Modernizes Leadership: Aligns the leadership structure of the Coast Guard with that of the other armed services to improve interaction and cooperation among the services.

Improves National Security Competencies: Authorizes the appointment of Coast Guard officers to critical national security assignments.

Promotes Private Sector Solutions: Encourages the Coast Guard to explore commercial technologies to solve problems affecting mission performance.

Seeks Independent Recommendations: Requires the GAO to review Coast Guard mission performance and provide recommendations on ways to improve effectiveness.



Enhancing Oversight, Increasing Efficiency, and Saving Taxpayer Dollars:

Enhances Accountability in Acquisitions: Makes important reforms to the acquisition process to reduce costs and improve the quality of assets delivered.

Increases Congressional Oversight: In order to ensure accountability and stronger oversight, the legislation requires the Coast Guard to plan for its long-term acquisition and manpower needs.

Prevents Taxpayer Dollars From Being Wasted: Requires the Coast Guard to establish a process to account for public safety services it provides at privately held events and Coast Guard resources utilized at such events. Eliminates, consolidates, and modifies duplicative and outdated reporting requirements.

Improves Accountability at the Federal Maritime Commission: Reauthorizes this independent federal agency, responsible for regulating the U.S. international ocean transportation system, at currently authorized levels for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. This bill includes reforms to the administrative procedures of the FMC and limits the spending of taxpayer funds on superfluous awards.

Reducing Regulatory Burdens to Create Jobs and Encourage Economic Growth:

Reduces Regulatory Burdens: Requires the Coast Guard to certify private physicians to make medical fitness determinations of merchant mariners, aligns the expiration of the multiple documents American mariners must carry to work on board vessels, eliminates the need for annual registration of recreational vessels, and encourages the Coast Guard to reduce reporting requirements on industry.

Promotes Common Sense Regulations: Revises outdated regulatory definitions to bring them in line with modern industry practice, and to improve manufacturing efficiency and recreational vessel safety.

