



OFFICE OF THE  
NATIONAL COMMANDER

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January 7, 2019

The Honorable John Thune  
United States Senate  
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Thune:

On behalf of the nearly 2 million members of The American Legion, we are pleased to express support for S.21, a bill making continuing appropriations for Coast Guard pay in the event an appropriations act expires prior to the enactment of a new appropriations act. The U.S. Coast Guard is the only military branch working without pay during the current government shutdown.

In order to conduct operations as normal, S. 21 provides funding necessary to provide pay and allowances to members of the Coast Guard, including reserve components who perform active service and inactive duty training, as well as the retirees who dedicated their careers in defense of our nation. This act also calls for pay for civilian employees of the Coast Guard, and such funding necessary to provide pay and allowances to contractors of the Coast Guard.

No member of our military service should ever live in fear of not being paid. We look forward to working with you during the 116th Congress to pass legislation that will address this issue permanently.

Coast Guard personnel carry out an expansive real-world responsibility as it relates to both national and homeland security. This current government shutdown and any such future situations of this nature brings a severe hardship on our active duty members, who work in the same capacity as their counterparts of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force. The American Legion recognizes that families of deployed and activated military personnel face unique difficulties and hardships. In that vein, we would like to remind all Coast Guard families can request assistance from The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance program at [www.legion.org/financialassistance](http://www.legion.org/financialassistance)

Through American Legion Resolution No. 23, *Support for the Department of Homeland Security and Coast Guard*, passed in 2017, we support legislation that fully funds the United States Coast Guard to achieve its numerous vital missions. The American Legion sincerely appreciates your leadership and support of our servicemembers and veterans.

For God & Country,

Brett P. Reistad  
National Commander