



January 3, 2019

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

Dear Senator Thune,

As the former senior enlisted leaders of the U.S. Coast Guard, we join in with the Sea Service Family Foundation, along with several military service organizations in applauding you and your Senate colleagues for introducing Senate Bill 21, *Pay Our Coast Guard Act*, before the 116th Congress. This particular proposed legislation would ensure that entitled pay for our all of our Coast Guard members, active duty, reserve, retired and civilians would not be disrupted in the event of a government shutdown. Approval of this legislation would also bring parity with the Department of Defense military and civilian personnel.

Our Coast Guard personnel carry out an expansive multi-mission 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 military counterparts of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force.

In addition, this government shutdown will pose an extreme hardship on Coast Guard and other social services relief programs such as the Coast Guard Mutual Assistance, which by its charter is available to assist personnel for financial needs under circumstances of this nature.

While this is a fix for the current shutdown, further legislation needs to be written and introduced to ensure all branches of the military are protected from losing pay in the event of a shutdown going forward.

We greatly appreciate your support in this matter.

Sincerely,

Hollis B. Stephens, 3rd Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Robert J. Lloyd, 6th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Eric A. Trent, 7th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Vincent W. Patton III, 8th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Charles W. Bowen, 10th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Steven W. Cantrell, 12th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard