



**U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, SCIENCE & TRANSPORTATION**

The Coast Guard Reauthorization Act of 2025

The Coast Guard Reauthorization Act of 2025 includes important reforms to combat sexual assault and harassment, in response to [Operation Fouled Anchor](#), which revealed gross mishandling of sexual assault and sexual harassment cases of U.S. Coast Guard personnel. The law creates new initiatives to tackle housing affordability, improve access to services Coast Guard families need, boost workforce development and improve maritime safety. It increases funding to help the Coast Guard deliver on critical priorities such as icebreakers and 52-foot heavy-weather lifeboats, raises penalties for abandoned and derelict vessels, and encourages more collaboration with Tribes.

A section by section is available [HERE](#).

The bipartisan U.S. Coast Guard Reauthorization Act of 2025:

Requires Stronger Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Prevention and Response: The law establishes or updates numerous Coast Guard and Academy authorities and programs to improve reporting, oversight, prevention and accountability related to sexual misconduct in response to [Operation Fouled Anchor](#), which revealed gross mishandling of sexual assault and sexual harassment cases of U.S. Coast Guard personnel. A summary of these provisions is [HERE](#).

Former Commandant Linda Fagan completed the Accountability and Transparency Review which called for 33 directed actions to address sexual assault and harassment. During his confirmation hearing Admiral Lunday committed to completing these directed actions.

Expands Affordable Housing Opportunities: Allows the Coast Guard to acquire housing that is available both on the market and in new housing construction programs. This is particularly important in coastal areas — like Cape Disappointment, Grays Harbor, and Port Angeles —where Coast Guard families face a difficult time accessing affordable, quality housing due to competition with seasonal rentals and other challenges associated with remote units.

Supports Coast Guard Families, Including Those Stationed in Washington:

1. **Creates the First Vice Admiral of Personnel:** To support the more than 40,000 active service members, the law establishes a new Vice Admiral leadership position solely focused on supporting the needs of personnel and their families, from housing to health care, investments in childcare, and improving recruitment and training programs.

2. **Jump Starts Hiring of Health and Family Service Providers Across the Entire Service:** Provides direct hiring authority to swiftly fill more than a hundred vacancies, including behavioral and mental health professionals, medical specialists, childcare service providers, housing supervisors, criminal investigators and other positions to protect the health and wellbeing of Coast Guard members and their families. It also adds two new telemedicine rooms at the Coast Guard Academy.
3. **Improves College-to-Service Career Pathways:** The new law improves the College Student Pre-Commissioning Program to allow more colleges and universities to participate and to increase recruitment of students interested in commissioning into a Coast Guard career.

Increases Federal Funding to Deliver on Icebreakers and Heavy Weather Lifeboats: The law increases authorized funding for 2026 and 2027, which will help the Coast Guard deliver on critical priorities such as polar icebreakers, 52-foot heavy-weather lifeboats, and other priority acquisition programs.

1. Seattle [will be home](#) for the Coast Guard's fleet of three heavy polar icebreakers. Sen. Cantwell [toured U.S. Coast Guard Station Disappointment](#), where the future fleet of heavy-weather lifeboats will be homeported to support search and rescue missions, which is critical to safety of people working in the fishing and maritime sector in Pacific and Grays Harbor counties. In 2023, Sen. Cantwell secured a downpayment of \$12 million to replace the heavy-weather boats in the 2023 Appropriations Act. In November, Sen. Cantwell [secured a commitment from Acting Commandant Adm. Lunday](#) that the Coast Guard will spend \$110 million to support the construction of new docks and other infrastructure improvements to support heavy surf search and rescue operations and training based at Cape Disappointment and the National Motor Lifeboat School based in Ilwaco, Washington.

Creates the First-Ever Tribal Advisor: The law creates a new senior position within the Coast Guard to advise the Commandant and other Coast Guard leaders on how the Coast Guard can work more closely with Tribes. The new Special Advisor will also be charged with ensuring the Coast Guard upholds trust responsibilities to tribal governments, improving tribal engagement and consultation activities and ensuring that Tribes have a voice on Coast Guard programs that impact tribes, including oil spill preparedness and response, fisheries oversight and the protection of natural resources.

Boosts Local Tribal Partnerships to Improve Conservation: Gives the Coast Guard new authorities to support habitat conservation and other resilience projects in coordination

with state and local governments and tribes. This important new authority will ensure tribes and other organizations can partner with the Coast Guard to protect treaty fishing rights and maintain access to cultural and natural resources such as salmon, shellfish and other important resources.

Supports the Commercial Fishing and Maritime Industries: The law continues authorizing the use of a satellite tracking system to mark fishing gear locations, which ensures gear is not lost and avoids potential damage by derelict gear. It also supports fishing vessels engaging in temporary towing operations as part of salmon hatchery development in Alaska. The law creates new training and credentialing opportunities for qualified mariners, veterans and the general public seeking to become mariners, and it expedites processing times for merchant mariner licensing documents to help close this critical workforce gap.

Reauthorizes the Whale Desk: Extends the Whale Desk at Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound by two years, through FY2028. Authored by Senator Cantwell in the Coast Guard Reauthorization Act of 2022, the “[Whale Desk](#)” at Sector Puget Sound gives vessel operators and mariners near real-time data about the location of whales to reduce encounters that disturb whales, including noise pollution and ship strikes. The pilot program also includes a “hotline” where callers can report whale sightings in real time. The data collected will be valuable for researchers who track whale migration patterns.

1. According to the Coast Guard, 75 whale sightings have been reported to the Sector Puget Sound Whale Desk since its opening in December 2023. [update number]
2. Sen. Cantwell helped celebrate the [launch](#) of the Whale Desk in February 2024. Photos and videos are available [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

Cracks Down on Abandoned Vessels: Improves oversight of derelict and abandoned vessels by requiring the Coast Guard to develop and maintain an inventory list of these vessels to improve tracking, management and coordination between federal, state, tribal and other relevant entities. It authorizes a new federal penalty of \$500 for abandoning vessels. Abandoned and derelict vessels pose unique and costly threats to coastal communities and ecosystems by leaking pollutants and imperiling marine traffic. According to the [WA Department of Natural Resources](#), 319 derelict and abandoned boats were removed from Washington state waterways from 2021-2023.

Supports Shipbuilding in the United States:

1. **Protects Shipbuilding in the U.S.:** [Current law](#) authorizes the President to construct Coast Guard and other military vessels overseas if it is in the “national security interest” to do so. The Coast Guard had never used that authority until the

current [Administration authorized the construction of four Arctic Security Cutters in Finland](#). This new law requires to the President provide written justification for the overseas construction of any Coast Guard vessels 30 days in advance of entering a contract. This will provide U.S. shipyards the opportunity to pursue litigation and discourage foreign construction.

2. **Recapitalization of Aging Fleets:** Directs the Coast Guard to develop plans to replace key aging fleets, including:
 1. the 52-foot motor lifeboat fleet stationed in Washington and Oregon, which will be constructed at Rozema Shipyard in Washington;
 2. the 87-foot patrol boats, seven of which are currently stationed in Washington (Port Townsend, Port Angelese, Bellingham, Everett, and Bangor);
 3. the nine 140-foot Bay Class Icebreaking Tugs, which are based in the Great Lakes and New England; and
 4. the aging Great Lakes Icebreaker the CGC MACKINAW.
3. **Contract Improvements:** Allows the Commandant to consider the capability of a shipyard, not just the lowest price for a bid, before entering a contract. This will help address underbidding that has resulted in shipbuilding delays and failed acquisition programs for the Coast Guard. This will benefit Washington shipyards that produce quality vessels and pay employees competitive wages.

Protects Personnel from Illicit Drug/Fentanyl Exposure: As the Coast Guard carries out important drug interdiction missions to stop the flow of illegal drugs, this law requires all installations to maintain a supply of naloxone or similar medication to treat opioid or fentanyl overdoses or exposure by Coast Guard members and the public in search and rescue or response calls. Fishing vessels were not required to carry naloxone on board, even though fishing crews are [five times more likely to suffer fatal overdoses](#) as compared to the general population.

Improves Prevention of and Response to Hazing and Bullying: Requires the Commandant to improve training to help Coast Guard members recognize, prevent and respond to hazing and bullying. The law also directs the Coast Guard to work with other armed services to establish and use a comprehensive and consistent data-collection system for reporting hazing and bullying incidents, and the Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy must make publicly available policies that define hazing, aim to prevent hazing and prescribe adequate punishment for policy violations.

Maps Arctic Maritime Routes: The Bering Sea is expected to see increased fishing, commercial, and other vessel traffic over the coming decades. As a key international trade and maritime route, this law requires an analysis of projected traffic in the Bering Strait, and the emergency response capabilities and infrastructure needed to support this increased vessel traffic and prevent oil spills in the Bering Sea and the Arctic.

Boosts International Pacific Cooperation: Requires the Coast Guard to develop a plan to increase international training opportunities in the Pacific, including with the Taiwan Coast Guard. This coordination will strengthen American relations, combat illegal fishing, and boost international security in the Pacific.

Prepares Tsunami Evacuation Plans: Requires the development of tsunami evacuation and preparedness plans for Coast Guard units in tsunami zones, including across the West Coast and Pacific Northwest. It also requires the Coast Guard to consider vertical evacuation as a lifesaving option for Coast Guard members.

Supports the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA):

1. **Supports NOAA Corps Officers:** The law makes improvements to personnel management, education assistance programs, pilot recruitment programs and more. NOAA Corps members help manage maritime research, support disaster response and monitor weather forecasting including hurricanes and atmospheric rivers, as well as performing other cutting-edge weather forecast and research needs.
2. **Modernizes NOAA Vessel Fleet:** Authorizes replacement and modernization of the NOAA research vessel fleet and improves oversight of the fleet, which helps maintain our nation's weather and scientific buoy network, conducts fisheries research, maps the ocean floor including in the Arctic and supports other important oceanographic and conservation priorities.
3. **Removes Aging NOAA Vessels:** Allows NOAA to use the proceeds of obsolete vessel sales to support the acquisition or repair of other NOAA vessels to help make the fleet more resilient in the future.

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