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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,  
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

March 21, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

As Ranking Member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, I write to express my strong support for the U.S. Coast Guard in the Fiscal Year 2023 Federal budget. The Coast Guard has unique authorities and capabilities that advance our National Defense Strategy, including through protecting U.S. ports and patrolling the high seas. The Coast Guard plays a critical role in securing our nation and deserves the full resources needed to carry out its missions.

Over the past decade, the U.S. Coast Guard has taken on a greater number of missions to detect, deter, and disrupt terrorist threats and other criminal activity. As a result, Coast Guard capabilities and resources are in greater demand now than at any time in our nation's history. The Coast Guard's increased activity has provided additional maritime law enforcement, disaster response efforts, and security operations in the U.S. domain. This is true both at home, and in the projection of power and the rule of law abroad in places like the Indo-Pacific.

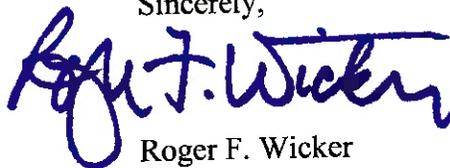
The U.S. Coast Guard has risen to the occasion on multiple fronts despite having an aging fleet and inadequate resources. The oldest ship in the Coast Guard was commissioned in 1944, and many others were built in the 1960s. This service has a reputation of doing more with less, but it could achieve a great deal more if it had the resources it needs. Congress and past Administrations have recognized this and provided funding to help the Coast Guard begin to modernize its fleet—and the investments are beginning to pay off.

Despite these needed improvements, the Coast Guard overall remains underfunded. Since fiscal year 2010, the Coast Guard's operations and maintenance funds have failed to keep up with inflation, resulting in a significant loss of purchasing power. The cumulative impact over this period has been \$3 billion in lost operations and maintenance readiness. Every Coast Guard mission begins and ends at a shore facility. The Coast Guard owns or leases more than 20,000 such facilities, nearly half of which are beyond their useful service life. These piers, boat stations, sectors, and air stations, which are spread across more than 2,700 locations, represent a

strategic opportunity to enhance the Coast Guard's operational effectiveness. We can and should do better for our Coast Guard men and women.

I ask that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's budget request for fiscal year 2023 continue to support the U.S. Coast Guard's recapitalization efforts, account for increased operations costs, and, for the first time, adequately address the \$3 billion in shore side infrastructure needs. I appreciate your consideration of this request, and I look forward to working with you to support the men and women of our U.S. Coast Guard.

Sincerely,



Roger F. Wicker  
Ranking Member