



Duncan Hunter
U.S. House of Representatives
50th District, California

February 17, 2017

Honorable James Mattis
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528-1000

Dear Secretary Mattis and Secretary Kelly:

As you are aware, the U.S. Guard is an invaluable asset for the protection of American sovereignty and national security. And as U.S. Marines, I am certain that you both appreciate the willingness and the ability of a military service to do more with less—as the Marine Corps has done for so long. No different, the Coast Guard has operated on the same terms and I am no less concerned with readiness shortfalls facing the Coast Guard as I am with those facing the Marine Corps or any other service branch.

Under the leadership of your predecessors and the last 8 years of the previous Administration, the Coast Guard has conducted its mission requirements under severe budget restraints. This has curtailed the ability for Coast Guard expansion and further limited both the reach and effectiveness of the service beyond its already complex and far ranging mission responsibilities.

One of the most significant acquisition challenges facing the Coast Guard currently is the acquisition of heavy and medium icebreakers. Right now, the Coast Guard has a minimum requirement for six vessels in total, evenly split between heavy and medium ice breakers.

You are intimately familiar with the urgency to develop these assets in short order. Therefore, I respectfully ask for your support to ensure this need is not just identified, but also that adequate funding is requested. This is also necessary for other Coast Guard priorities.

In your respective leadership capacities, I also ask that both the law enforcement and military service duties of the Coast Guard are evaluated to fully understand the urgent needs that currently exist. And, as a part of any funding considerations, to include any emergency requests that might currently be under discussion, it is important that the Coast Guard is not overlooked.

As Chairman of the House Committee on the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, as well as a U.S. Marine who had the great honor of serving under your leadership, I have observed the Coast Guard closely over the last several years and deeply value its critical mission. As such, I am always available to discuss the Coast Guard in greater detail and put in further perspective the uniqueness of its mission and critical funding needs that demand prompt consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Duncan Hunter", written over a circular blue stamp.

Duncan Hunter
Chairman
Subcommittee on Coast Guard
and Maritime Transportation

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Senator Feinstein", written in a cursive style.