

**TESTIMONY OF ADMIRAL ROBERT J. PAPP, JR.
COMMANDANT, U.S. COAST GUARD**

USCG FY 2014 BUDGET

**BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**

May 14, 2013

Madam Chairman, Senator Cochran, Senator Moran, thank you for having me here today.

I'd like to deviate just for a moment from my prepared remarks to address a deplorable issue that's confronting the Armed Forces today.

A little over a year and a half ago, I communicated with every member of the Coast Guard. I do that through something called "Shipmates" messages. And "Shipmates 19" was entitled "Respecting Our Shipmates: Duty Demands Courage." And I'd just like to read a couple of phrases from that message:

When I assumed my duties as Commandant, I told you that respecting our shipmates is one of my four guiding principles...

Sexual assault, hazing, harassment and discrimination undermine morale, degrade readiness and damage mission performance. These and other similar acts of misconduct break our obligation to one another. Each incident of sexual assault, hazing, harassment or discrimination is a deliberate act that violates law, policy and service standards.

We will not tolerate this behavior in the Coast Guard. We will intervene to prevent or halt these acts when they're occurring. We will investigate and discipline those who have violated law and service policy....

...And let me be clear, there are no bystanders in the Coast Guard. Our duty to respect our shipmates demands each of us have the courage to take immediate action to prevent or stop these incidents... Your duty as a Coast Guardsman is to

intervene, prevent or halt it and report it. Failure to help a shipmate in those circumstances demonstrates a lack of courage that is contrary to our core values. I expect every Coast Guardsman will display the same courage in those circumstances as they would in rescuing someone in peril at sea.

American must have confidence that Coast Guard men and women understand their duty and are committed to our service....

Commanding officers and officers in charge shall read this message at the next quarters or appropriate muster to assure my expectations and intent are clear.

I've repeated that message both in my state of the Coast Guard speech this year and I've been traveling around the country talking to my senior leaders. In fact, when I leave here today, I'll be going down to Norfolk to speak to all my senior flag officers from the Atlantic area and close to 2,000 Coast Guardsmen down there.

We're taking this seriously. And when we get into the question and answer session, if there are any questions regarding our sexual assault program, I'd be happy to answer them.

But I know we're here today to talk about the F.Y. 2014 budget. I'd like to begin by thanking you for the tremendous support you provided in the 2013 Appropriations Act and the Hurricane Sandy recovery emergency supplemental, which enable us to continue to recapitalize an aging fleet and storm-damaged facilities, sustain front-line operations, and care for our people.

Unfortunately, much like the weather and the seas we face on a daily basis, the Coast Guard cannot control the fiscal environment in which we operate. We will make best use the resources you provide to safely and effectively conduct operations in the areas of greatest risk to the nation, while recapitalizing our cutters, boats and aircraft to address current and emerging threats, particularly in the offshore environment.

The FY 2014 budget sustains the most critical front-line operations while funding our most critical acquisition projects. In the current fiscal environment, this required tough decisions informed by my highest priorities. These were difficult decisions for me and for our Service – but they were the best decisions to ensure

we provide the next generation of Coast Guardsmen the tools required to protect our nation.

We are making great strides in recapitalizing the Coast Guard's aging fleet.

In October we will christen the fourth National Security Cutter, the HAMILTON. On Friday we will celebrate the keel-laying of NSC #5, the JAMES, and the production contract for NSC #6 was awarded just two weeks ago. Taking into account inflation and other factors within the contract for earlier NSC's, the cost for NSC number 6 is nearly the same as both NSC 4 and NSC 5. This illustrates the maturity of the project, the stable and efficient production line, and professionalism and achievements of the Coast Guard acquisition corps.

These cutters are doing amazing work. On her most recent patrol, the WAESCHE interdicted contraband worth an estimated \$7.5 million, and just last week BERTHOLF disrupted a shipment of cocaine valued at over \$5 million.

These cutters are also key to meeting growing demands in the Bering Sea and Arctic. With the extreme conditions and lack of shore infrastructure, the operational effectiveness and command and control capabilities of the NSC will be critical to our success. As receding Arctic ice gives way to increased human and economic activity, the Coast Guard must be present to ensure safety, security and stewardship there. And we are preparing for future operations in this emerging maritime frontier.

We have taken delivery of 5 Fast Response Cutters, and these, too, have proven to be amazing platforms. Several more will soon join the fleet, and FRC #9, the KATHLEEN MOORE, was launched last week.

We have taken delivery of 14 HC-144 aircraft, contracted for the ninth HC-130J, completed life extending work on our Patrol Boats, and are nearly complete with life-extending projects on our Medium Endurance Cutters.

Despite these successes, we must still work to recapitalize the Coast Guard with the ships, boats and aircraft the Nation needs. I am very happy to report that I received strong support from the Secretary and the President on my highest acquisition priorities, including funding for the 7th National Security Cutter in the FY2014 budget.

As I look back on our successes of the past year, I have never been more convinced about the value your Coast Guard provides to the Nation. While mindful of the current fiscal environment, I remain optimistic about the future of the Coast Guard. It is my duty to look beyond the annual budget cycle to prepare and adapt the Service, and keep it moving forward to address the greatest maritime safety and security risks to the nation now and in the future. In December, we were reminded of the dangers of our duties as I presided at the memorial service for Senior Chief Boatswains Mate Terrell Horne III of Coast Guard Cutter Halibut. He was killed by smugglers when they rammed his Coast Guard pursuit boat near San Diego. Our commitment to the Nation and our duty to honor the memory of Senior Chief Horne strengthens our resolve to defeat these threats. The men and women of the Coast Guard give their all and make sacrifices every day, putting their country first. I have never been prouder of them and they have never been better. Working together, we owe them our very best efforts to provide the support they need.

This Subcommittee has long supported the men and women of the Coast Guard, recognizing their sacrifice, and on behalf of my Coast Guard Shipmates, I thank you.