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[H.R. 4188, Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Thursday, December 10, 2015, the House will consider [H.R. 4188](#), *the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015*, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 4188 was introduced on December 8, 2015, by Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA) and was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

SUMMARY

H.R. 4188 authorizes Coast Guard and Federal Maritime Commission funding levels for two years and includes provisions to improve the Coast Guard's mission effectiveness, help modernize the Service's aging vessels and other assets, and reform U.S. maritime transportation laws. The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015 is designed to support the Coast Guard's efforts to carry out its missions, while helping to replace and modernize the Coast Guard's aging assets in a cost effective manner, enhancing oversight, and reducing inefficiencies to save taxpayer dollars.

The bill is largely similar to H.R. 1987, *the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015*, which the House passed by voice vote on May 18, 2015. H.R. 4188, which represents an agreement with the Senate, includes a number of additional provisions not contained in the previously-passed House bill, including several regarding the conveyance of Coast Guard property in Point Reyes Station, California; Tok, Alaska; and Point Spencer, Alaska.

Click [here](#) for the previous Legislative Digest on H.R. 1987.

BACKGROUND

The United States Coast Guard is one of our Nation's five armed services whose critical missions include saving lives, safeguarding our shores, and protecting living marine resources. These missions also include search and rescue, marine safety, maritime law enforcement, drug and migrant interdiction, maintaining aids-to-navigation, icebreaking, marine environmental protection, oil spill prevention and response, defense readiness, and ports, waterway, and coastal security. The Coast

Guard consists of approximately 40,000 active duty military personnel, 7,500 reservists, and 8,300 civilian employees.¹

This military force falls under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) during peace time but may become a specialized force within the Navy during times of war. In 2014, the Coast Guard responded to over 17,500 search and rescue cases saving over 3,400 lives, conducted over 8,600 security boardings of vessels entering U.S. ports, inspected over 12,500 U.S. flagged commercial vessels to ensure safety and security requirements were met, maintained over 51,000 aids to navigation, and interdicted over 3,500 undocumented migrants and 140 metric tons of illegal drugs.²

COST

A Congressional Budget Office (CBO) cost estimate is currently unavailable.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Jerry White](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 5-0190.

¹ See Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure document—“[The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015](#).” at 2.

² Id.