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

### FLOOR SITUATION

On Monday, February 1, 2016, the House will consider the Senate Amendment to [H.R. 4188](#), *the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015*, under suspension of the rules. The bill was introduced on December 8, 2015 by Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA) and passed the House on December 10, 2015, by voice vote. The Senate then passed the bill, with an amendment, by voice vote on December 18, 2015.

### SUMMARY

The Senate Amendment to 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 reforms 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 Senate Amendment to the bill is largely similar to the House-passed version of H.R. 4188.. The Amendment strikes miscellaneous provisions related to penalty wages and recourse for noncitizens of the United States and provides a provision related to the inapplicability of load line requirements to certain United States vessels traveling in the Gulf of Mexico.

Click [here](#) for the Legislative Digest of the House-passed version of the bill.

### 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

### **COST**

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

### **STAFF CONTACT**

For questions or further information please contact [Rob Goad](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 6-1831.

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

<sup>2</sup> Id.