

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 06, 2020

The Honorable Chad Wolf
Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Wolf:

We are writing to express our support for the release of appropriated funds in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-93) for Long Lead Time Material funding to enable a 12th National Security Cutter. As you know, Congress appropriated \$100.5 million for fiscal year 2020 for the U.S. Coast Guard (USCCG) to begin procurement of certain equipment which is necessary in advance of construction of the ship. As part of the request for Fiscal Year 2021 the Department of Homeland Security proposed permanently rescinding \$70 million of these funds. Given the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we ask that you now make those funds available immediately in support of our nation's Defense Industrial Base.

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing significant negative economic consequences for businesses across our nation. The National Security Cutter industrial base of 477 suppliers in 39 states includes businesses in a number of states such as Pennsylvania, Michigan, New Jersey, and Ohio that will receive orders from the purchase of the long lead time material funding provided in FY20. Many of these businesses provide materials critical to our nation's security and some are now extremely fragile as business conditions continue to deteriorate. Timely funding of materials for a 12th National Security Cutter would provide much needed near term stability to these businesses while enabling the longer term creation of a ship to serve our nation and Coast Guard for decades to come.

National Security Cutters are at the forefront of the fight to keep drugs out of our country. We were pleased to see the announcement on April 1, 2020 of an enhanced counternarcotics operation in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea. These vessels and their supporting assets are the most potent and effective platforms to deploy against the illegal drug cartels. In 2017, a record year, the USCG deployed 29 cutters, which seized an astonishing 243 metric tons of illegal drugs. Just four of those cutters were National Security Cutters, yet those four cutters interdicted an impressive 33% of the total drugs seized that year.

National Security Cutters also play a vital role in furthering our security interests in the Western Pacific and the Indo-Pacific Command Area of Responsibility. Last year, under the command of the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet, two National Security Cutters conducted freedom of navigation exercises in the Taiwan Strait and worked with our ASEAN partner nations to serve as an effective counterbalance to the growing influence of China in the region. These vessels have also

been involved in United Nations Security Council sanctions enforcement on North Korea, further demonstrating the critical role of these ships in support of missions worldwide.

Given the impressive operational record of these ships and the fragility of the industrial base which underpins our national ability to produce these vessels, we strongly urge you to release the previously appropriated FY20 funds to the U.S. Coast Guard as soon as possible so that we can commence production of equipment and procurement of material for this critical national asset.

Sincerely,



Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



Steve Chabot
Member of Congress

Cosigning Members of Congress:

Alcee L. Hastings	Elaine G. Luria	Mario Diaz-Balart
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Ed Case		William R. Timmons, IV

CC: Russ Vought, Acting Director, Office of Management & Budget
Admiral Karl Schultz, Commandant, United States Coast Guard