



THE RETIRED MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS OF THE COAST GUARD

28 September 2023

Dear Members of Congress,

We pen this letter as a collective of retired Master Chief Petty Officers of the Coast Guard, who in our last active-duty assignments served as the most senior ranking enlisted members, representing the dedicated men and women of the United States Coast Guard. Our role and responsibilities during that prestigious and important assignment was looking after the needs of our Coast Guard members, to include quality of life, readiness, health, and well-being. Even in retirement, we continue to support our service, as well as all branches of the armed forces.

We know from experience that service members encounter profound hardships when deployed away from home, often with little knowledge of the challenges their families endure on the home front. The financial strain resulting from missed paychecks during government shutdowns is a burden unfairly shouldered by our military families.

We are united in urging you to support S. 2835, the "Pay Our Military Act of 2023," and H.R. 5641 to ensure the financial security of service members remains unbroken during political impasses. Additionally, we ask that you consider extending this protection to the uniformed service members of NOAA and PHS who serve alongside us.

Our military members should never be reduced to political pawns; they stand as our nation's guardians. Let us ensure they are rightfully compensated for their unwavering commitment to freedom and democracy, irrespective of the political climate.

Sincerely,

Hollis B. Stephens
3rd Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

R. Jay Lloyd
6th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Eric A. Trent
7th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Vincent W. Patton III
8th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Franklin A. Welch
9th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Charles W. 'Skip' Bowen
10th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Steven W. Cantrell
12th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

Jason M. Vanderhaden
13th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard