

# United States Senate

June 22, 2022

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Chair  
Committee on Commerce, Science,  
and Transportation  
511 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science,  
and Transportation  
555 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker:

As you consider the upcoming Coast Guard Reauthorization Act, we write to request that you include the text of the *Service to the Fleet Act*, which we recently introduced, in the base text of your bill. This critical legislation will authorize full funding for the unmet infrastructure needs of the U.S. Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore.

The Coast Guard Yard is a critical national asset. Since 1899, the Yard has served as the Coast Guard's sole shipbuilding and major repair facility and an essential part of the Service's industrial base and fleet support operations. One of only five remaining public shipyards in the United States, the Yard supports more than 2,000 full-time personnel and their families and provides vital services not only to the Coast Guard but to the Army, Navy, NOAA, and other Federal agencies. As the Coast Guard's only Navy-certified heavy weapons overhaul facility, the Yard hosts an average of eight visiting vessels and their crews at any given time and provides housing, medical and emergency services, human resources, morale, welfare and recreation support, and other base activities to approximately 1,000 visiting crew members annually.

Despite its critical role in our national security, the Coast Guard Yard faces a rapid and widespread failure of critical infrastructure, nearly all of which was built in during a 4-year period during World War II. Based on the grading criteria of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the overall infrastructure grade for the Coast Guard Yard is a D+, which is below the C- average for other Coast Guard facilities. Infrastructure failures at the Yard have caused injuries, had negative environmental impacts, reduced productivity, increased repair costs, and undermined the ability of the Coast Guard Yard to carry out its mission.

Current resources are inadequate even just to maintain the current—unacceptable—state of the infrastructure and facilities at the Yard. A substantial investment is needed in the very near term to allow the Yard to meet its infrastructure needs and continue providing essential services to the fleet for long into the future.

For that reason, we ask that you include the *Service to the Fleet Act* in your upcoming Coast Guard Authorization Act.

Sincerely,



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Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



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Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator