

**BUILDING THE COAST GUARD AMERICA NEEDS:  
ACHIEVING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND ACCOUNT-  
ABILITY WITHIN THE SERVICE**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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JUNE 23, 2021  
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**BUILDING THE COAST GUARD AMERICA  
NEEDS: ACHIEVING DIVERSITY, EQUITY,  
AND ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE SERVICE**

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**Wednesday, June 23, 2021**

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m., via Webex, Hon. Bennie G. Thompson (Chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Thompson, Jackson Lee, Payne, Correa, Slotkin, Cleaver, Green, Clarke, Swalwell, Watson Coleman, Demings, Barragán, Gottheimer, Katko, Higgins, Guest, Bishop, Van Drew, Norman, Miller-Meeks, Clyde, Gimenez, Meijer, Cammack, and Pfluger.

Also present: Representative Carolyn B. Maloney.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Committee on Homeland Security will come to order.

The committee is meeting today to receive testimony from Admiral Karl L. Schultz, the Commandant of the Coast Guard, on “Building the Coast Guard America Needs: Achieving Diversity, Equity, and Accountability Within the Service.”

Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare the committee in recess at any point.

Without objection, the gentlewoman from New York, Mrs. Carolyn B. Maloney, the Chair of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, will be permitted to participate in today’s hearing.

The gentlewoman from New Jersey, Mrs. Watson Coleman, shall assume the duties of the Chair in the event I run into any technical difficulties.

I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

Admiral Schultz, good morning. I am pleased you are appearing before the committee to discuss the Coast Guard’s efforts to develop a culture of equity, inclusion, justice, and accountability.

Today’s hearing is part of the committee’s long-running efforts to help the Coast Guard develop a diverse, inclusive environment free from harassment, bullying, assault, and retaliation. It is precisely because this committee supports the Coast Guard, its mission, and its people that we are committed to ensuring the service addresses the challenges it faces.

I have long had concerns about the lack of diversity in the Coast Guard, especially among its officer ranks and among its leadership. The demographics of the Coast Guard fail to reflect the diversity

of the American public. For example, only 5.6 percent of active-duty members self-identify as Black or African American, compared to about 14 percent of the U.S. population.

Fostering diversity is critical to building a culture that welcomes and celebrates varied perspectives and experiences and ensures the Coast Guard reflects the public it serves.

Last weekend, we lost a trailblazer, as Commander Merle Smith, Jr., the first Black graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, passed away. We must honor his service by working to ensure more minority cadets enter and graduate from the Academy, which serves as a conduit to the service's leadership ranks.

I am also thinking today of my late friend and colleague Elijah Cummings, who was fiercely dedicated to demanding accountability, protecting whistleblowers, and supporting the Coast Guard. I was pleased that language I authored to increase diversity and cultural competence at the Academy was included in last year's Coast Guard Authorization Act, which, fittingly, was named for Chairman Cummings.

As we will discuss today, the Coast Guard has much further to go to ensure diversity and inclusion across the service.

In 2019, this committee and the Oversight and Reform Committee investigated the Coast Guard's handling of allegations of harassment and bullying made by Lieutenant Commander Kimberly Young-McLear, a member of the Coast Guard Academy's faculty who is Black and identifies as lesbian.

The investigation made clear that the Lieutenant Commander's allegations were never investigated properly and, as the Department of Homeland Security's Office of the Inspector General substantiated, she was retaliated against for raising these allegations.

The committees issued a joint Majority staff report that highlighted significant problems with the Coast Guard policies and practices that contributed to the failure to fully and fairly investigate the allegations.

The report also included 7 recommendations to improve investigative processes at the Academy and throughout the Coast Guard. I am glad the Coast Guard agreed with the committee on the need for major changes and concurred with all the recommendations, and I look forward to hearing from the Commandant about the status of their implementation.

Unfortunately, Lieutenant Commander Young-McLear's experience is just one example of such issues within the Coast Guard. Since the Office of Inspector General first reported on her case in 2018, it has identified 3 additional instances of whistleblower retaliation within the service.

In each case, a member of the Coast Guard reported misconduct, only to be retaliated against in the form of poor performance marks, removal from leadership positions, or other negative consequences. I find these reports extremely troubling. Violations of the Military Whistleblower Protection Act contribute to a culture of fear that discourages reporting of misconduct.

The Office of Inspector General also issued a report in June 2020 documenting major cultural problems at the Coast Guard Academy. The report found problems with how the Academy investigated allegations of race-based harassment in 11 cases between 2013 and

2018. In 6 cases, the Academy did not thoroughly investigate the allegations or discipline cadets. In some instances, cadets committed similar misconduct again.

Just last week, the committee received the Coast Guard report documenting disturbing trends in a number of sexual assault and harassment allegations. According to the Coast Guard, reports of sexual assault have more than doubled in the last 10 years, with 245 reports of sexual assault in fiscal year 2020 alone.

This report follows a 2018 survey that found almost half of female cadets at the Academy said they were sexually harassed, and about 1 in 8 women said they had received unwanted sexual contact.

Taken together, these reports should be setting off every alarm bell, warning light, and alert system at the Coast Guard headquarters and on every base, cutter, and air station. As the senior leader of the Coast Guard, Admiral Schultz is ultimately responsible for responding to this five-alarm fire, and I look forward to hearing his plan for putting it out.

Unsurprisingly, this committee continues to hear from whistleblowers regarding disturbing allegations of sexual assault, harassment, bullying, retaliation, and mishandling of internal investigations.

I have pressed the Coast Guard about some of these cases. In one case, a service member was recently granted a retroactive promotion after her performance suffered due to her supervisor's abusive and inappropriate behavior. It should not take Congressional intervention for the Coast Guard to do the right thing.

While I understand there is a strong desire from the Coast Guard to be forward-looking, the service cannot reach its full potential if it does not learn from the past. I appreciate the Commandant has led efforts to address some of these issues, but, unfortunately, it is clear that those efforts are either falling short of what is needed or not making an impact quickly enough.

The Coast Guard, with the help of this committee and stakeholders, must confront harassment, bullying, and retaliation head-on. The Coast Guard must do more than pay lip service to diversity, inclusion, and equity in press releases and in Congressional testimony; it must deliver results for the service members of the Coast Guard.

Before I close, and without objection, I include the following statements in the record: A statement from Lieutenant Commander Kimberly Young-McLear, which outlines her experiences as a whistleblower and calls for service-wide cultural reforms; a statement from the American Federation of Government Employees, which describes concerns with several personnel issues and provides recommendations; and a statement from the New London chapter of the NAACP, which highlights complaints of racism that have been raised to their attention and requests a meeting with Admiral Schultz.

[The information follows:]

STATEMENT OF COMMANDER (SELECT) KIMBERLY C. YOUNG-MCLEAR, PH.D.

JUNE 21, 2021

Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Katko, and distinguished Members of the committee, I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to provide this written statement in support of the Coast Guard achieving diversity, equity, and accountability within the service. In 2019, I publicly testified at the joint hearing before the subcommittees of the Oversight & Reform and Homeland Security. As I testified then, I am advocating for a better Coast Guard—one that America needs. We need real, systemic change to address a culture that severely lags behind our public-facing brand. I continue to have a unique lens as a senior active-duty Coast Guard officer; survivor; whistleblower; homeland security professional; scholar; educator; and diversity, equity, and inclusion practitioner. While we are continuing to make investments in the recapitalization of assets, shore infrastructure, and information technology, we must also make critical investments in our workforce. Meeting the complex National security environment of tomorrow demands our full attention to our greatest asset—our people. I write this statement with the full acknowledgement of all those who proudly served before me and those are still serving, many of whom have never received justice.

#### BACKGROUND

1,768 days ago, the Coast Guard violated the Military Whistleblower Protection Act. 930 days ago, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General (OIG) not only substantiated my claims of retaliation, but also revealed the cruelty and pervasiveness of how allegations are systematically swept under the rug. I endured more than 5 years of bullying, harassment, discrimination, and retaliation, including suicide ideation in 2016. Additionally, retaliation never truly ends when the organizational culture is not centered on justice. All individuals (ranks O5 and above) from the 2018 DHS OIG Whistleblower Retaliation report and the 2019 Righting The Ship report were ultimately protected and all have since been rewarded with promotions or competitive job assignments. These two public reports, however, were only the tip of the iceberg, not the totality of the intentional harm that was caused against me. Documents from my past complaints total over a thousand pages, include affidavits from Admirals and others which were later directly refuted by evidence uncovered by the DHS Inspector General. These documents, while not publicly shared, have been at the immediate disposal of the Coast Guard for several years. To this date, not a single member of the Coast Guard has ever been held accountable for these egregious violations.

Disturbingly, there are still several major elements to my case that remain unaddressed, despite numerous opportunities by the current Commandant to take action. On February 22, 2019, then-Department of Homeland Security Secretary Nielsen, directed Admiral Schultz to take specific action following the findings of the DHS OIG retaliation report. In Secretary Nielsen's directed action memo, she underscored that her "direction does not preclude you from taking other actions within your authority as you determine necessary." Yet, the Commandant denied my requests for a formal written apology, a meeting with the to discuss ways in which the culture must improve, and accountability. I continue to advocate for a Coast Guard the Nation needs, because similar egregious cases like what I endured continue to occur across our service. The top leadership and others in the Coast Guard have "moved on,"but I know that survivors like myself will not move on from these matters until there is real justice, accountability, and dignity for everybody.

#### THE COST TO THE NATION

Building the Coast Guard the Nation needs is essential and urgent. The absence of diversity, equity, and accountability erodes our preparedness and agility to address National security threats and mission readiness. It also has a direct impact on our public trust and the dignity of those who voluntarily serve our Nation. Since testifying in December 2019, there has been an even higher rate of individuals contacting me in various stages of hopelessness, seeking guidance in a range of sensitive cases from sexual assault, toxic commands, hostile work environments, bullying, harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. Their cases are not isolated, but rather indicative of larger service-wide trends of sexual assault, bullying, anti-harassment & hate incident, and EEO complaints.

The Coast Guard certainly has many strengths. As Commandant Admiral Schultz recently testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security in April 2021, he stated our culture is one that "entrusts and empowers its per-

sonnel at every level to lead with a bias for action—taking on-scene initiative and bringing solutions to complex problems.” He continues to share that “while extremely valuable in executing the service’s missions, these traits may also serve to veil the true impacts of the Coast Guard’s readiness challenges. As Coast Guard men and women take it upon themselves to accomplish the mission at all costs, the thousands of added hours required to overcome asset, technology, and infrastructure readiness issues drive workforce fatigue, and come at the expense of training and critical skills retention.”

To offer different perspective, however, we also have an iceberg—a “plain sight and below the surface” culture. We have some leaders that have a bias for action, or rather—inaction. This typically manifests in various forms of abuse of power leading to sweeping allegations of toxic and unlawful working environments further under the rug. Often times it is the complainant or victim that is seen as the “complex problem” needing solving, not the work environment or behaviors of perpetrators. Solutions may look like retaliation, silencing, gaslighting, victim blaming, isolating, or mishandling complaints. While the Coast Guard is seen in a highly visible way executing our missions, this can veil the true impact that toxic and unlawful environments have on mission readiness. As Coast Guard personnel tend to accomplish the mission at all costs, including survivors like myself who endured more than 5 years of workplace abuse, the thousands of added hours required to overcome toxic and unlawful climates drives workforce fatigue and comes at the expense of the retention of a diverse, equitable, and accountable workforce.

To build a Coast Guard that America needs, leaders in the Coast Guard must change behaviors to expect different and equitable outcomes. Leaders must approach addressing our internal organizational culture with the same vigor, vocality, moral courage, integrity, dignity, transparency, and sense of urgency as ensuring for example, we receive a paycheck or executing our mission during a pandemic. We must normalize these behaviors in every pay grade and rank. We must institutionalize these behaviors across the implementation of every Coast Guard policy and program. A culture which lacks accountability when there are injustices, undeniably impacts our diversity and equity.

#### 2015 CULTURE OF RESPECT REPORT SIGNIFICANCE

A 2015 baseline study into our service culture was conducted by workforce analysts at the Coast Guard’s Force Readiness Command. In this study, the Coast Guard defined a “Culture of Respect” as an optimal state free from sexual assault, harassment, hazing, bullying, intimidation, discrimination, and retaliation. This team’s final analysis about our own culture was never released to our workforce, despite no discernable personal identifying information of survivors who painstakingly shared their perspectives as part of the interview methodology. Analysts identified 41 distinctive gaps, along with recommendations of how to close them, between the current state of the Coast Guard culture and the optimal state. The 6 most common themes were 1. Accountability, 2. Leadership, 3. Data/Information, 4. Policy, 5. Communications/Messaging, and 6. Training. Even in 2015, we had very clear knowledge that lack of accountability was the most common gap, yet the Coast Guard (as of 2019) had only implemented a mere handful of the total report recommendations. One 2015 recommendation made clear to repeat the study every 3.5 to 4 years to align with the Commandant’s transition. Given the 2015 Culture of Respect report was only a baseline, the intent of repeating the study was to assess the effectiveness of any past recommendations, and decide if new measures would be needed to get the Coast Guard’s culture to an optimal state.

As a survivor, I continue to be extremely disheartened and disturbed to know that had the Coast Guard actually taken the 2015 Culture of Respect report results seriously and implemented the vast majority of recommendations, then perhaps the years of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and retaliation I endured could have been prevented altogether. According to the Coast Guard’s own report, they identified gaps such that “policy or UCMJ violations vary between officer, enlisted, and civilian. In many cases where the accused is a high performer, interviewees said that they perceive that leaders focus on the positive performance rather than the violation, and, in essence, brush the problems ‘under the rug’ . . . perpetrators of Culture of Respect issues escape accountability and instead resign, retire, or transfer.” It is also then conceivable that some of the recent current workforce demographic representation trends, such as, from the 2019 Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service (DACOWITS) and also the negative work environment factors revealed in the 2019 RAND Study on Improving Gender Diversity in the U.S. Coast Guard: Identifying Barriers to Female Retention, could have been properly addressed and mitigated earlier.

We must, therefore, immediately address the root causes of our culture that is both in plain sight and below the surface. There is simply no valid reason for Admiral Schultz not ordering another study at the start of his tenure as Commandant, had one not been already initiated. There is no real justification for refusing to release the full report to the entire workforce, after years of requests, since he has been Commandant. There is no reasonable rationale for not directing resources, such as, the Vice Commandant, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard, Deputy Commandant of Mission Support (DMCS), Civil Rights Directorate (CG-00H), Human Resources Directorate (CG-1), Performance Readiness Task Force (PRTF), to implement all remaining report recommendations. There has been clear avoidance and missed opportunities to leverage survivors; subject-matter experts; specific members of the Coast Guard's Affinity Group Council; and deckplate leadership, diversity advisory committees (LDACs) throughout the Coast Guard. The status quo must end. These decisions have all occurred under this Commandant. We now have an opportunity to conduct another study to better ensure the success of the incoming 27th Commandant of the Coast Guard. We must be honorable and allow the voices and stories of brave survivors' to be heard for the betterment of the Coast Guard. We must break this pattern of withholding information that will benefit the entire service, including survivors. For your committee's reference, I am enclosing a copy of the 2015 Culture of Respect Executive Summary.

#### CULTURAL MARKERS FOR PROGRESS

- A culture where the bravery of our rescue swimmers is viewed in the same light as those who have the courage to report alleged misconduct in the workplace. Both can save lives.
- A culture when perpetrators, and those who protect them, are not promoted and advanced through the ranks, while those who reporting wrongdoing are punished, retaliated against, or pushed out. Both increases diversity, equity, and accountability.
- A culture that understands and eliminates tokenism. Symbolic change is not a substitute for real, systemic change.
- A culture where individuals have the psychological safety, moral courage, and cultural competence to share the truth about own workforce culture, even if this type of introspection as a service is uncomfortable. Discomfort is growth.
- A culture where transparency in data on suicides, harassment, sexual assault, bullying, hazing, discrimination, AHHI, EEO, etc is provided to the workforce and disaggregated by race, gender, sexual orientation, and other demographics (as applicable). We cannot fix what we fail to measure.
- A culture that fully understands intersectionality and equity. The leaders of the only group of anti-racist, multicultural LGBTQIAP+ members of the workforce have been denied the opportunity to meet with the Commandant to discuss the urgent issues facing our communities, such as sexual assault, transphobia, and bullying.
- A culture that actually protects all types of complainants and whistleblowers by holding perpetrators immediately accountable and diligently working to restore dignity and trust. We simply cannot be a model law enforcement and humanitarian service otherwise.
- A culture that centers on human dignity and worth. We must issue a formal written apologies to survivors and other remedies (should they desire), and immediately hold perpetrators and those who condone perpetrators accountable.
- A culture where we strive higher than minimal compliance and "good news stories," but has the maturity, integrity, and honor to acknowledge when we fail and learn from those failures because it is ethical and a critical investment in building a Coast Guard the Nation needs.

#### CLOSING

We must always strive to be a just service. A just service will attract and retain a diverse, equitable, and accountable workforce within the Coast Guard. Last, I'm reminded of the activism of survivors like Dr. Olivia Hooker, who was the first African-American woman to enlist in the Coast Guard. Before the 2007 Congressional hearing on the Tulsa-Greenwood Race Riot Claims Accountability Act, in reference to surviving the Tulsa Massacre, she stated "as a child, I had believed every word of the Constitution, but after the riots happened, I realized that the Constitution did not include me." Similarly, we have an obligation to ensure that our core values, service policies, and laws include everyone in the Coast Guard, not simply on paper, but in daily practice. The past and on-going injustices that have occurred within the Coast Guard are a stain on our legacy, but it is also our actions that follow that

determine our character. Achieving a just service will better ensure workforce resiliency and meeting the demands of an increasingly complex National security environment of tomorrow.

Thank you to my wife, family, friends, and colleagues for your never-ending support. Thank you, Members of Congress, for your continued support of the individuals of the Coast Guard, and for the opportunity to provide my written statement.

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LETTER FROM THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO  
(AFGE)

*June 23, 2021.*

CHAIRMAN THOMPSON, RANKING MEMBER KATKO, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE: The American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (AFGE), which represents 700,000 Federal and District of Columbia employees in 70 agencies, including more than 3,000 civilian employees of the Coast Guard, thanks the committee for holding this important hearing today, "Building the Coast Guard America Needs: Achieving Diversity, Equity, and Accountability within the Service." The title of this hearing represents a crucial goal for the Coast Guard that is fundamental to AFGE's mission: Without diversity, equity, and accountability, America does not receive the very best from this Service.

AFGE's members at the Coast Guard provide critical support to the Service, including in human resources, engineering and logistics, information technology and cyber security. The civilian personnel provide support so that Service is better prepared to be responsive to America's needs in all of its operations. That is why some of the policies and culture of the Coast Guard must be examined and addressed to ensure all of its people are treated fairly and have equal opportunities in their work. We present three specific concerns and recommendations to address them.

First is fairness and transparency in hiring and promotion. When officers retire from active service, it is not uncommon that they go home on a Friday from that service and show up on a Monday as a high-level civilian employee. They enter positions that were never posted and where civilian personnel were never offered the opportunity to compete for promotions. Typically, these are positions at the GS-12 level and higher and they go to white males. There are rarer occasions where lower-graded positions go to immediate service retirees. These positions are more likely to go to men of color. Very rarely, the jobs may be awarded to women.

Hiring almost exclusively from active-duty retirees precludes taking advantage of the expertise from within the current civilian workforce where we represent individuals in positions up to a GS-14 grade. AFGE recommends that the Coast Guard thoroughly review its civilian hiring and promotion practices and report to the committee on its findings. This report should examine the practice of hiring active duty into civilian positions, and the race and gender of these new hires, the General Schedule grade of the positions into which these individuals are hired, other opportunities for promotion the civilian workforce is either afforded or excluded from and the result of that hiring practice. The Coast Guard should be transparent about who is moving from uniformed personnel to civilian positions, the skills required for those positions and how they compare with the skills of those in the existing civilian workforce.

Second among AFGE's concerns with regard to diversity, equity, and accountability is the overly internal and opaque practice the Coast Guard undergoes when civilian personnel report on their experiences of discrimination. The Coast Guard engages in an "Anti-Hate and Harassment Investigation" (AHHI) process. This investigation under AHHI is conducted internally and the commanding officer makes the decision as to whether there are grounds to pursue the complaint. It is reportedly quite rare that this process results in a finding of sufficient grounds for a pursuit of the complaint or recommendation for policy changes or punishment. The findings are not publicly available.

This process is at best confusing for the employee because they are told an investigation will take place, but they are not advised that this internal investigation has no bearing on an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) violation. This results in the employee refraining from filing an EEO complaint within the deadline to do so because they may not understand that AHHI is a separate process and does not provide Federal EEO relief. By the time the internal AHHI complaint is concluded, the employee has missed his or her window to file a more comprehensive EEO complaint. AFGE recommends that the Coast Guard ban the practice of informing the employee of this internal process at its outset, provide them with information they need to file an EEO complaint and review what may be made public about its internal AHHI process. The Coast Guard should further report to this committee on the

effectiveness of the AHHI process, whether it is right to leave the finding up to the CO, or whether a more independent body and process would yield fairer results. We recommend this includes race and gender data with regard to results of the AHHI filings and recommendations.

Finally, our Coast Guard union leadership finds it very difficult to assist in cases where an employee is seeking reasonable accommodation for disability. This can range from a request for a “vari-desk” which others have use of in the Coast Guard workplace, to continued full telework because a doctor has advised an employee that they are in a high-risk category for serious negative effects of contracting COVID-19 and should not be in the workplace as the agency develops its reconstitution plan. This has been true even for employees whose work can be performed completely in a remote environment. We note that outside of the exceptional instance of emergency telework during the COVID-19 pandemic, our union contract provides for up to 4 days per week of telework. AFGE strongly recommends that the Coast Guard honor its contract and review its standards for providing telework, so at a minimum it adheres to the union contract and that it give particular consideration to expanding telework, especially for those who are medically fragile. AFGE further recommends that the agency review the requests for reasonable accommodation, the reasons why they were accepted or denied, and provide to the committee a justification for any reasonable accommodations that have been denied in the past 5 years.

AFGE and its Coast Guard civilian employees appreciate the opportunity to provide the House Homeland Security Committee our recommendations for measures that will improve the workplace with regard to diversity, equity, and accountability. We fully believe that all employees of the Coast Guard should know they are valued and have equal opportunities for advancement and fairness in the work place. We look forward to working with you to advance these practical and transformational recommendations.

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LETTER FROM THE NEW LONDON NAACP

*June 18, 2021.*

To the Honorable Chairman Bennie G. Thompson; To the Ranking Member John Katko and other distinguished Members of the Committee on Homeland Security; we the members of the Greater New London Connecticut Branch of the NAACP are grateful for the opportunity to participate in this very important hearing on “Building the Coast Guard America Needs: Achieving Diversity, Equality, and Accountability within the Service”.

Through the years, the New London NAACP has been the repository for civil rights complaints from our men and women who serve. Those who complained represent a broad spectrum of service members, including active duty, those who previously served in addition to those who provide a contracted service for the Academy. The grievances are all the same; racial discrimination, racial profiling, micro-aggressions, bias, disparate treatment, disparate discipline and poor recruitment initiatives and retention outcomes. Racism hurts and attacks the body and spirit of an able-bodied service person. Human dignity is an inviolable and inalienable right, one in which our brave service men and women fight to secure. We, the Members of the NAACP, aspire to experience a more perfect Academy.

As such, the New London NAACP has been actively engaged with the USCGA for many years and applaud the local efforts to build a more diverse and inclusive institution. But impactful leadership is clearly recognized in both thoughts and deeds and it flows freely and unobstructed from the top down. We, the Members of the New London NAACP are not, at this point prepared to say that Admiral Schultz demonstrates the capacity to reimagine and reinforce a more equitable Academy. The NAACP has appealed to his office with requests to meet, those requests have gone unanswered. The silence from the Admiral’s office speaks volumes.

The cooperation and timeliness in response on the local level is to be commended. The NAACP was recently made aware of a racial profiling incident involving a contracted provider and a Master Chief. The allegations also alleged disparate assignments based on race. While the details of the investigation have yet to be divulged; the NAACP was assured by RADM William Kelly that measures are in place to ensure that contracted providers exemplify and embrace the Academy’s core values.

Finally, we the Members of the New London NAACP would like to thank the Honorable Bennie G. Thompson and the Members of the Committee on Homeland Secu-

ity for their interest and dedication to this important issue and we look forward to partnering in “Building the Coast Guard America Needs”.

Respectfully,

JEAN M. JORDAN,  
*President,*

TAMARA K. LANIER,  
*Vice President,*

*The Greater New London CT NAACP Membership.*

Chairman THOMPSON. Admiral Schultz, I hope you will commit to reading these statements and responding to the concerns they raise.

The committee looks forward to hearing from you today on how you plan to achieve diversity, equity, and accountability in the Coast Guard.

[The statement of Chairman Thompson follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON

JUNE 23, 2021

Admiral Schultz, I am pleased you are appearing before the committee to discuss the Coast Guard’s efforts to develop a culture of equity, inclusion, justice, and accountability. Today’s hearing is part of this committee’s long-running efforts to help the Coast Guard develop a diverse, inclusive environment free from harassment, bullying, assault, and retaliation. It is precisely because this committee supports the Coast Guard, its mission, and its people that we are committed to ensuring the service addresses the challenges it faces.

I have long had concerns about the lack of diversity in the Coast Guard, especially among its officer ranks and among its leadership. The demographics of the Coast Guard fail to reflect the diversity of the American public. For example, only 5.6 percent of active-duty members self-identify as Black or African American, compared to about 14 percent of the U.S. population.

Fostering diversity is critical to building a culture that welcomes and celebrates varied perspectives and experiences and ensures the Coast Guard reflects the public it serves. Last weekend, we lost a trailblazer as Commander Merle Smith Jr., the first Black graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, passed away. We must honor his service by working to ensure more minority cadets enter and graduate from the Academy, which serves as a conduit to the service’s leadership ranks.

I am also thinking today of my late friend and colleague, Elijah Cummings, who was fiercely dedicated to demanding accountability, protecting whistleblowers, and supporting the Coast Guard. I was pleased that language I authored to increase diversity and cultural competence at the Academy was included in last year’s Coast Guard Authorization Act—which, fittingly, was named for Chairman Cummings. As we will discuss today, the Coast Guard has much further to go to ensure diversity and inclusion across the service.

In 2019, this committee and the Oversight and Reform Committee investigated the Coast Guard’s handling of allegations of harassment and bullying made by Lieutenant Commander Kimberly Young-McLear, a member of the Coast Guard Academy’s faculty who is Black and identifies as lesbian. The investigation made clear that the Lieutenant Commander’s allegations were never investigated properly, and as the Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General substantiated, she was retaliated against for raising the allegations.

The committees issued a joint Majority staff report that highlighted significant problems with Coast Guard policies and practices that contributed to the failure to fully and fairly investigate the allegations. The report also included 7 recommendations to improve investigative processes at the Academy and throughout the Coast Guard. I am glad the Coast Guard agreed with the committees on the need for major changes and concurred with all the recommendations, and I look forward to hearing from the Commandant about the status of their implementation. Unfortunately, Lieutenant Commander Young-McLear’s experience is just one example of such issues within the Coast Guard.

Since the Office of the Inspector first reported on her case in 2018, it has identified 3 additional instances of whistleblower retaliation within the service. In each case, a member of the Coast Guard reported misconduct only to be retaliated against in the form of poor performance marks, removal from leadership positions, or other negative consequences. I find these reports extremely troubling. These vio-

lations of the Military Whistleblower Protection Act contribute to a culture of fear that discourages reporting of misconduct.

The Office of the Inspector General also issued a report in June 2020 documenting major cultural problems at the Coast Guard Academy. The report found problems with how the Academy investigated allegations of race-based harassment in 11 cases between 2013 and 2018. In 6 cases, the Academy did not thoroughly investigate the allegations or discipline cadets. In some instances, cadets committed similar misconduct again. Just last week, the committee received a Coast Guard report documenting disturbing trends in the numbers of sexual assault and harassment allegations.

According to the Coast Guard, reports of sexual assault have more than doubled in the last 10 years, with 245 reports of sexual assault in fiscal year 2020 alone. This report follows a 2018 survey that found almost half of female cadets at the Academy said they were sexually harassed, and about 1 in 8 women said they had received unwanted sexual contact. Taken together, these reports should be setting off every alarm bell, warning light, and alert system at Coast Guard Headquarters and on every base, cutter, and air station.

As the senior leader of the Coast Guard, Admiral Schultz is ultimately responsible for responding to this five-alarm fire, and I look forward to hearing his plans for putting it out. Unsurprisingly, this committee continues to hear from whistleblowers regarding disturbing allegations of sexual assault, harassment, bullying, retaliation, and mishandling of internal investigations. I have pressed the Coast Guard about some of these cases.

In one case, a service member was recently granted a retroactive promotion after her performance suffered due to her supervisor's abusive and inappropriate behavior. It should not take Congressional intervention for the Coast Guard to do the right thing. While I understand there is a strong desire from the Coast Guard to be forward-looking, the service cannot reach its full potential if it does not learn from the past.

I appreciate that the Commandant has led efforts to address some of these issues, but unfortunately it is clear those efforts are either falling short of what is needed or not making an impact quickly enough. The Coast Guard, with the help of this committee and stakeholders, must confront harassment, bullying, and retaliation head-on. The Coast Guard must do more than pay lip service to diversity, inclusion, and equality in press releases and Congressional testimony; it must deliver results for the service members of the Coast Guard.

Chairman THOMPSON. With that, I recognize the Ranking Member, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Katko, for an opening statement.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for having this most important discussion today. It is part of our solemn duty and oversight to deal with issues like these. Unfortunately, I don't think it is unique to the Coast Guard, and it is issues that we need to discuss and vet throughout the military, and this is the way to do it. So thank you.

I want to welcome everybody here on both sides of the aisle and my good friend from New York, Mrs. Maloney, who is a pinch-hitter today, it looks like. So welcome aboard.

I also want to thank our Nation's 26th Commandant, Admiral Karl Schultz, for appearing before this committee today to discuss progress he has made moving forward with diversity and inclusion efforts at the Coast Guard. It is far from a complete process, but we do have to recognize the things that he is doing to move this ball forward.

As Admiral Schultz noted in his written testimony, "To remain the world's best Coast Guard, we must be the world's most diverse and inclusive Coast Guard. Anything less means that we will fail to garner the talent, innovation, creativity, and performance necessary to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex maritime operating environment."

I agree with his sentiment, and I look forward to discussing these and other issues at today's hearing so that we can all achieve that goal.

I want to thank the Commandant for his hard work in recruiting and retaining a diverse Coast Guard service. Since becoming the Commandant in June 2018, Admiral Schultz and his leadership team have focused on increasing the recruitment and retention of women and underrepresented minorities. He has taken a number of proactive steps that have helped make the Coast Guard a strong and contemporary branch of the Armed Forces. I applaud him for his efforts and am interested to hear more about the initiatives he has advanced.

That said, I am sure he and all upstanding service members in the Coast Guard would agree that any allegations of bias, harassment, or other misconduct should be taken seriously and thoroughly and competently investigated.

The allegations mentioned by Chairman Thompson are serious in nature for sure, and I appreciate the opportunity that this hearing will provide the Commandant to articulate why our men and women in uniform are a part of a service committed to rooting out bad apples and ending misconduct.

I also believe that, on the whole, the Coast Guard has a positive story to tell in regard to its culture. I look forward to hearing more about that today.

The Coast Guard has an increasingly complex, difficult mission and is facing a number of critical homeland security challenges beyond those related to the scope of this hearing today. Indeed, this service faces strategic headwinds related to a changing Arctic; addressing illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in the Pacific; countering Russian and Chinese aggression; as well as evolving threats of drug and human smuggling stemming from the on-going border crisis.

In reality, the Coast Guard is on the front lines of a rapidly-evolving geopolitical landscape and is being forced to accomplish its complex multimission with increasingly strained resources. That is why I am deeply troubled by the anemic funding levels proposed by this administration, which would slash Coast Guard funding apart from limited salary enhancements.

While funding challenges for the service are not new, the Coast Guard is a branch of America's Armed Forces and is truly on the front lines of our Nation's National security—and those front lines are expanding, particularly with respect to the Arctic—while they are also being tasked with law enforcement missions critical to the homeland. Unfortunately, the administration's budget fails to support our men and women in uniform in this and many other ways.

Additionally, I hope to hear about the unique set of challenges facing the Coast Guard in protecting our Northern Border, where districts such as my own in central New York face their own set of threats with limited Federal resources available to help mitigate them.

Despite these budgetary constraints, I look forward to discussing how the Coast Guard is positioned to defend our homeland and National security interests with a diverse work force.

I want to thank the Chairman, as always, and I yield back the balance of my time.

[The statement of Ranking Member Katko follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER JOHN KATKO

Thank you, Chairman Thompson, and thank you for having this most important discussion today. It is part of our solemn duty and oversight to deal with issues like these. I want to thank our Nation's 26th Commandant, Admiral Karl Schultz, for appearing before this committee today to discuss progress he has made moving forward with diversity and inclusion efforts at the Coast Guard. It's far from a complete process but we need to recognize the things he is doing to move this ball forward. As Admiral Schultz noted in his written testimony, "to remain the world's best Coast Guard, we must be the world's most diverse and inclusive Coast Guard. Anything less means that we will fail to garner the talent, innovation, creativity, and performance necessary to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex maritime operating environment." I agree with his sentiment and look forward to discussing these and other issues at today's hearing.

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Additionally, I hope to hear about the unique set of challenges facing the Coast Guard in protecting our Northern Border, where districts such as my own in Central New York face their own set of threats with limited Federal resources available to help mitigate them.

Despite these budgetary constraints, I look forward to discussing how the Coast Guard is positioned to defend our homeland and National security interests with a diverse workforce.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

I now recognize the Chair of the Oversight and Reform Committee, the gentlewoman from New York, Mrs. Carolyn Maloney, for an opening statement.

Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you, Chairman Thompson. Thank you for inviting me to participate in today's important hearing and for your

committee's unwavering commitment to ensuring that the U.S. Coast Guard operates in an effective, efficient, accountable manner.

Nearly 3 years ago, then-Ranking Member Thompson and then-Ranking Member Elijah Cummings of the Oversight Committee, which I now Chair, embarked on an 18-month joint investigation into allegations of harassment and bullying within the Coast Guard, including the mishandling of harassment complaints and retaliation.

Our investigation revealed deeply troubling evidence of failure by Coast Guard leadership to conduct prompt and thorough investigation into allegations of harassment and bullying, failure to hold officials accountable for deficient investigations, and failure to take corrective action to address retaliation against individuals who report harassment and bullying.

After reviewing thousands of papers—of documents and conducting interviews with Coast Guard personnel, our 2 committees issued a joint staff report with our investigative findings. The report made 7 recommendations, and I am pleased that the Coast Guard agreed to accept all 7.

However, recent events show that much work remains to be done. In June 2020, the Department of Homeland Security IG issued a report on race-based harassment allegations at the Coast Guard Academy and found that more than two-thirds of the allegations it reviewed over a 6-year period were not properly handled by the Academy. In December 2020, the DHS IG released another report that substantiated whistleblower retaliation against a Coast Guard member, in clear violation of the Military Whistleblower Protection Act. Just last week, the Coast Guard issued its sexual assault report for fiscal year 2020 to Congress, reporting an increase in sexual assault allegations over the past year.

These recent developments make clear the urgent and on-going need for action to correct the disturbing pattern of harassment, retaliation, racism, and discrimination within the Coast Guard.

I am so pleased that Admiral Schultz has agreed to testify on these matters. Our late Chairman Cummings worked tirelessly and passionately for years to improve the Coast Guard and never shied away from holding the Coast Guard to the high standards that we should expect from all branches of our military.

I am honored to be able to continue the incredible work of Chairman Cummings, along with Chairman Thompson. We must protect those who dedicate their lives to protecting us. It is our duty, Admiral Schultz, and it is our duty in Congress.

Thank you.

I yield back.

[The statement of Hon. Maloney follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRWOMAN CAROLYN B. MALONEY

Chairman Thompson, thank you for inviting me to participate in today's important hearing, and for your committee's unwavering commitment to ensuring that the U.S. Coast Guard operates in an effective, efficient, and accountable manner.

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I am pleased that Admiral Schultz has now agreed to testify on these important matters.

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I am honored to be able to continue the incredible work of Chairman Cummings along with Chairman Thompson.

We must protect those who dedicate their lives to protecting us. It is your duty, Admiral Schultz, and it is our duty in Congress. Thank you, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Other Members of the committee are reminded that, under the committee rules, opening statements may be submitted for the record.

Members are also reminded that the committee will operate according to the guidelines laid out by the Chairman and Ranking Member in our February 3 colloquy regarding remote procedures.

Again, I welcome our witness, Admiral Schultz.

Without objection, the Admiral's full statement will be inserted in the record.

I now ask Admiral Schultz to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL KARL L. SCHULTZ, COMMANDANT,  
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Admiral SCHULTZ. Good morning, Chairman Thompson, Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Katko, Ranking Member Comer, and Members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today, and I appreciate, Chairman, you entering my written statement for the record.

Chairman, I also appreciate you recognizing the loss of Commander Merle Smith, who was a trailblazer and extraordinary coastguardsman, heroic in combat, and truly stayed linked to the Coast Guard Academy and leaves a long legacy there. We extend our sympathies to his wife, Lynda, and family.

Let me begin by thanking you, the committee leadership, for your support of the United States Coast Guard in our endeavor to create a fully inclusive Coast Guard where everyone can contribute the full power of their diverse backgrounds, experience, and thoughts.

I agree with our Commander-in-Chief when he said that equal opportunity is the bedrock of American democracy and diversity is one of our country's greatest strengths. The Coast Guard's greatest strength is our people. I believe it is critical to foster a culture of inclusion where we focus on achieving fair and equitable outcomes for all who serve.

The Coast Guard must be a learning organization. It is "commanders' business," as I term it, to ensure every Coast Guard member can contribute the full power of their backgrounds, experiences, and thoughts. We have not always gotten that right. Today, I want to assure the committee that I am listening, that your Coast Guard is listening, and we have and continue to take decisive action.

When I became Commandant in June 2018, I made readiness my top priority for the service. Coast Guard readiness has and always will begin with our people. We are dedicated to inclusive workplaces that mirror the great diversity of the American people we are honored to serve. We have made significant progress, which I hope to highlight for you, but this is on-going work, and we must drive continuous improvement across the service.

The release of our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, the DIAP, last summer was a big step forward. The Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan identifies tangible actions to improve diversity and inclusion, hold leadership accountable, and equip commanders with a standard set of resources.

To facilitate these efforts, we have prioritized the training and deployment of diversity change agents, who conduct diversity and inclusion training, coaching, and support to the total work force. By summer's end, we will have 125 change agents trained and able to lead training across the service at hundreds of units each year.

We continue to assess programs for their outcomes. We implemented improvements to our College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative, or CSPI, as it is better known, to increase the opportunities for individuals with diverse backgrounds to enter our officer ranks. We created a new officer recruiting branch, adding recruiters to key geographic locations to enhance the CSPI program as well as our other officer accession programs.

Only by improving awareness of the career opportunities the Coast Guard offers will we be able to identify and increase the diversity of our candidate pools. This is fundamental to our strategy of building a Coast Guard that is increasingly reflective of the American public we have the privilege to serve.

As a result of what we learned from the RAND Women's Retention Study, we have implemented work force initiatives, including updates to parental leave policies which authorize up to 120 days of leave. We have created a Reserve Component support or backfill program to help units maintain readiness when active-duty members step out on parental leave. We have updated uniform and grooming standards, adjusted assignment policies, and modernized the body composition program. We are seeing exciting early indicators that the 5–12 percent retention gap across the course of a 20-year career identified by the RAND study is narrowing significantly.

This summer, we anticipate receiving the results of another RAND study, commissioned to identify barriers in the recruitment and retention of our underrepresented active-duty Coast Guard work force. Early findings indicate access to mentors is important. Hence, we recently launched a new mobile-enhanced mentoring app to better connect mentors with mentees within and across the service.

Our work eliminating incidents of harassment, bullying, and retaliation continues in earnest. We have implemented all 16 recommendations from the December 2018 DHS Inspector General Report of Investigation, the December 2019 “Righting the Ship” Majority staff Congressional report, and the June 2020 DHS Inspector General audit.

Our updated anti-harassment and hate incident policies have greatly improved the manner in which we address allegations. We refined investigative procedures and processing time lines to expedite adjudication of complaints. We mandated additional training and enhanced selection criteria for investigators, and now investigators are appointed from outside the immediate chain of command. These changes add fairness and transparency to the investigative process.

In 2019, I issued a strategic vision for the Coast Guard Academy, I believe the first of its kind, and updated and subsequently added new positions to address spans of control and better link our academy to the broader service.

We have added additional oversight and prioritized creating a fully inclusive learning and training environment, making sure that the Academy and the Leadership Development Center co-located there are not only producing leaders for a diverse and inclusive Coast Guard but that they represent the diverse and inclusive work force we are trying to build.

So, in closing, this work continues and commands my attention and that of our entire senior leadership team. As the Coast Guard continues our efforts, I look forward to working with our Congressional overseers to pursue the necessary resources to effect change and to ensure we are focused on the proper and top priorities.

Just as the 2018 OIG report and the 2019 “Righting the Ship” report were catalysts for our intensive review of systems and processes, your support will be vital to our ability to recruit, train, and retain a diverse work force, the centerpiece of Coast Guard readiness.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Schultz follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL KARL L. SCHULTZ

JUNE 23, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Good morning Chairman Thompson, Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Katko, Ranking Member Comer, and distinguished Members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Coast Guard efforts to develop a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accountability. Since assuming my role as Commandant in 2018, I have made it a top strategic priority to establish the Coast Guard not only as a premier maritime Service, but as an employer of choice

that reflects the public we serve. I agree with our Commander-in-Chief when he said that equal opportunity is the bedrock of American democracy and diversity is one of our country's greatest strengths. Furthermore, I believe it is critical to foster a culture of inclusion where we focus on achieving fair and equitable outcomes for all that serve and accountability for wrongdoing that is swift and transparent. In coordination with this committee and the Congress, we have made significant strides to recruit, retain, and advance a diverse workforce, create lasting and powerful change, and enhance the culture and climate of the Service. I look forward to discussing our shared successes, and my vision of how we will continue this necessary work to evolve as a Service.

In order to be a premier maritime Service and an employer of choice, we must be the world's most inclusive and diverse Coast Guard. A Coast Guard where every member can contribute the full power of their diverse backgrounds, experiences, and thoughts. Anything less, and we will fail to garner the talent, innovation, creativity, and performance necessary to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex and technologically sophisticated maritime operating environment.

Advancing and sustaining the Diversity and Inclusion acumen of a 55,000-person organization requires strategic direction and sustained focus and engagement from all levels. The Coast Guard's Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) identifies tangible actions to improve Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), measure outcomes, hold leadership accountable, and most importantly, equip unit commanders with a standard set of resources to promote a diverse and inclusive working environment.

Our plan guides the development of individual and organizational understanding and skills through dialog. The guiding principles found in the DIAP aid leaders and members in understanding responsibilities, tools, and capabilities of the Coast Guard to culminate in strengthened, inclusive leadership, diversity, and improved accountability. The DIAP formalizes the Coast Guard's continued dedication to the assessment and development of policies and procedures. It also develops workforce training to help drive organizational change and lead to more inclusive behaviors. To facilitate these efforts, we prioritized the training and deployment of Diversity Change Agents. These Change Agents provide diversity and inclusion training, coaching, and support to the total workforce; provide command cadre coaching and counsel; and support the fostering of an organizational culture that values respect, diversity, equity, and inclusion. By the end of this summer, the Coast Guard will have 125 Change Agents fully trained and able to lead unit-level training.

While the DIAP represents bold steps to promote diversity and inclusion, we continue to assess our programs for equitable outcomes. Recent improvements to our College Student Pre-Commissioning (CSPI) program were implemented to create more diversity within the officer ranks. CSPI targets minority-serving institutions (MSIs), including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions. MSIs set up a pathway for a larger pool of candidates to be exposed to the Coast Guard and the CSPI program. They provide visibility of Coast Guard missions to students who are eligible for the CSPI program, open doors for recruiters to develop relationships with students and staff at colleges and universities and provide financial support through the Student Loan Repayment Program. The Coast Guard recently created a new officer recruiting branch which will stand up this summer. These active-duty officer recruiters were added to offices in key locations around the country including Washington, DC, Hampton Roads, Atlanta, Miami, and New Orleans to specifically enhance the CSPI program.

The Women's Retention Study and Holistic Analysis, delivered in March 2019 and undertaken in partnership with RAND's Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center, included 191 focus groups with 1,010 active-duty women and 128 active-duty men. The study results identified several factors impacting retention of women and the entire workforce. Based on recommendations from the study we quickly implemented several workforce initiatives to improve equitable outcomes for women. We updated our parental leave policy allowing for up to 114 days of leave (up to 30 days of prenatal leave, 42 days of medical convalescent leave, and 42 days of primary caregiver leave) to be granted to the primary caregiver, and created a program where Coast Guard Reservists can be called to backfill active-duty members when they go on prenatal, maternity convalescent, and primary caregiver leave. This program sustains unit readiness while best supporting our members with parental responsibilities. We improved uniform and grooming standards, capturing changes recommended from women serving in front-line operations.

We adjusted assignment policies, to facilitate the co-location of dual military families, and modernized the body composition program resulting in a new compliance method.

While these changes represent positive steps forward, front-line leadership must focus on building organizational climates where everyone can contribute the full power of their diverse backgrounds, experiences, and thoughts. Organizational climates must be free from conduct that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance. We must eliminate incidents of harassment, bullying, and retaliation that create intimidating, offensive, or hostile work environments within the Coast Guard. These behaviors erode mission readiness, are in direct violation of our core values of Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty and are simply not tolerated in the Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard is committed to responding to and investigating all allegations of harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, and retaliation, while holding offenders accountable. Our updated Anti-Harassment and Hate Incident (AHHI) policies ensure Commanders address and respond to every allegation, and we continue to take decisive action to improve Service-wide accountability. We implemented all 16 recommendations from the December 2018 DHS Inspector General Report of Investigation, the December 2019 "Righting the Ship" majority staff report, and the June 2020 DHS Inspector General Audit. This includes development of robust guidance for our field commanders, investigators, and legal advisors. Updated guidance demands refinement of investigative procedures and enforcement of process time lines and enhancing complaint adjudication. To maintain the highest levels of professionalism, we mandated additional training and enhanced selection criteria of investigators. To ensure fairness and transparency of process, we instituted policy that requires investigators be selected from outside the chain of command. All final actions are reviewed and approved by the next level in the chain of command to ensure accountability.

Two years ago in June 2019, we published The Coast Guard's Strategic Vision for the Coast Guard Academy. This document established clear direction to the Superintendent to foster an inclusive environment that enables students and faculty to reach their greatest potential. As part of the strategic plan, within our Mission Support enterprise, we created a DCMS-Deputy for Personnel Readiness (DPR) position. DCMS-DPR is a two-star admiral responsible for oversight of the Service's Human Resource directorate, our Force Readiness Command, and the Coast Guard Academy. In addition to the creation of DCMS-DPR, a Coast Guard Academy Program Manager position was created within the Mission Support organization at Coast Guard Headquarters. The purpose of these additional positions is to improve general oversight at the Coast Guard Academy and to carry out the published strategic vision.

The Academy prioritized the caring, ethical, and inclusive treatment of its people—as well as diversification of the faculty, staff, and cadet corps—central elements of the Academy Strategic Plan. These efforts were recognized by external entities including the National College Athletic Association (NCAA), which recognized the Academy as an Honorable Mention recipient of the NCAA Minority Opportunities Athletics Association Diversity and Inclusion award. The Academy is one of 3 honorable mention awardees and the only Division III institution recognized. Additionally, the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) recognized the Academy with the Bronze Award for Diversity and Inclusion—the highest level of recognition provided by ASEE that was presented to only 21 Colleges and Universities across the Nation.

These accolades speak to the Coast Guard Academy's efforts to create an inclusive learning and training environment that prepares cadets to become Service Ready Ensigns and Leaders of Character. Their important work continues as they strive for excellence while on-boarding each new class.

In 2020, we launched another study with the RAND Corporation to identify barriers in recruitment and retention, and underrepresentation of women and members of racial and ethnic minority groups in the active-duty Coast Guard. The Underrepresented Minorities study will be delivered later this summer. At our request, RAND provided preliminary survey findings, and we have already begun initial efforts to implement policy changes as a result of RAND's interim findings. Placement of new officer recruiters in Washington, DC, Hampton Roads, Atlanta, Miami, and New Orleans was inspired by these preliminary findings. Also, the study indicated access to mentors is important. In response, the Office of Leadership launched a new "mobile-enabled" mentoring program to better connect mentors with mentees through traditional "one-on-one" mentoring. The "app-based" mentoring program allows flexibility to foster inclusion and connection within and across our many Coast Guard communities. We look forward to sharing the results of this RAND Underrepresented Minorities study with the committee, and implementing initiatives to ensure members from underrepresented minority groups can thrive in the United States Coast Guard.

In collaboration with the Coast Guard, the Department of Homeland Security recently entered into a contract with the National Academy of Public Administration to conduct a study on the cultural competence of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, as required by Section 8272 of the Elijah E. Cummings Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2020. We look forward to the insight and recommendations from this study in order to advance the diversity, equity, and inclusion acumen at our Service Academy.

## CLOSING

The Coast Guard is hard at work to create lasting change and is committed to working closely with Congressional Members to enhance the inclusiveness of the Service. The ability to recruit, train, and retain a diverse workforce is critical to Coast Guard readiness, and I seek your support and commitment to attract a talented and diverse workforce, ready to protect and defend America's maritime domain. Being the world's most inclusive Coast Guard is what I call or term "Commander's Business" and a strategic priority for our Service capturing the full attention of our leadership team.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to your questions.

Chairman THOMPSON. I thank the witness for his testimony.

I remind each Member that he or she will have 5 minutes to question the witness.

I now recognize myself for questions.

Admiral Schultz, I discussed in my opening statement recent instances of substantiated retaliation, instances of race-based harassment, and reports of sexual assault and harassment. Each involved a victim who is or was a member of the Coast Guard with a life and career that have been permanently affected by their experience.

I recognize that these issues have existed within the Coast Guard for a long time and many of these cases occurred before you took the helm as Commandant. That said, you are ultimately in charge of the Coast Guard, and when you speak, you speak for the service.

One common frustration we have heard from whistleblowers is that the Coast Guard fails to adequately acknowledge that they have been wronged. They may have their performance ratings restored or the Coast Guard may improve policies as a result of their case, but they never receive anything they can point to to confirm that, yes, they were harmed by something that never should have been allowed to happen.

It would be incredibly meaningful for those who have been victimized while serving in the Coast Guard to receive an apology from you on behalf of the service. So I ask you, will you here, now, apologize on behalf of the Coast Guard to anyone who has suffered retaliation, assault, harassment, or bullying or otherwise been victimized while serving in the Coast Guard?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Chairman, thank you for the question.

So, any time anyone has had a negative experience or being wronged in the Coast Guard, I obviously, as the service chief, am concerned. We continually try to focus on corrective actions. When we have wronged somebody, clearly, I would offer my apology to that individual.

What we try to do is—each individual case is complex. We investigate them. With the committee's assistance and keen oversight, we have considerably increased the fidelity and, really, the professionalism of our investigatory actions. As a senior service member,

the service chief in this case, we want to bring accountability to all matters. We want to make sure we have, you know, investigative materials in front of us that allow us to reach the right decisions.

But, to your point, sir, any member that feels wronged, that was wronged, yes, obviously, sir, I take that incredibly seriously and am focused and I hope the testimony and our conversation this morning will point to the efforts we are doing to try to right those past, you know, mistakes and put us on a trajectory to be as forward-leaning and as inclusive as absolutely possible.

Chairman THOMPSON. Well, thank you. I am sure those victims who have been documented to have been wronged accept your apology. That is what you do when you are at the top.

Yesterday, the Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin, announced that he is recommending to the President a change in the military justice system to remove the prosecution of sexual assaults, domestic violence, and other special victims crimes from the military chain of command and, instead, have independent authorities decide whether to prosecute.

Do you agree with Secretary Austin's recommendation?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Mr. Chairman, clearly, the Coast Guard, as an armed force, have been and will continue to be in that discussion space. I have been tracking with keen interest the independent review commission and their findings. I saw Secretary Austin's remarks yesterday. Clearly, as a collective set of armed services, armed forces, we have not gotten this right, and there is room for improvement.

I do believe the other service chiefs have stated recent, you know, like opinions that commanders absolutely have to be part of the solution. You know, referring things to an outside body, there is potential benefit there. I think keeping the commander in the decision-making process, though, is absolutely essential, because this is commanders' business: (A), we want to prevent sexual assaults, but when they occur, we want them referred to the appropriate body, whether that is a court martial proceeding or otherwise.

What I do have a concern about is, when we refer those outside, if that was the trajectory—or the direction, trajectory it goes, if they chose not to do that, then does it come back in? Exactly how would a commander process it at that point?

But I am absolutely tracking the SecDef. We will follow suit with the other armed services. I am open to change, sir, for the very reason that we have not gotten this completely right, as reflected in the statistics you cited in your opening statement.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. I look forward to working with you.

I also look forward to working with you on the Coast Guard Academy Improvement Act, which I referred to as the Elijah E. Cummings Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2020. There are some things I think we can work on on that.

I now recognize the Ranking Member of the full committee, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Katko, for questions.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you again, Admiral, for being here.

I am very confident, and I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to probe specific issues of misconduct that have not

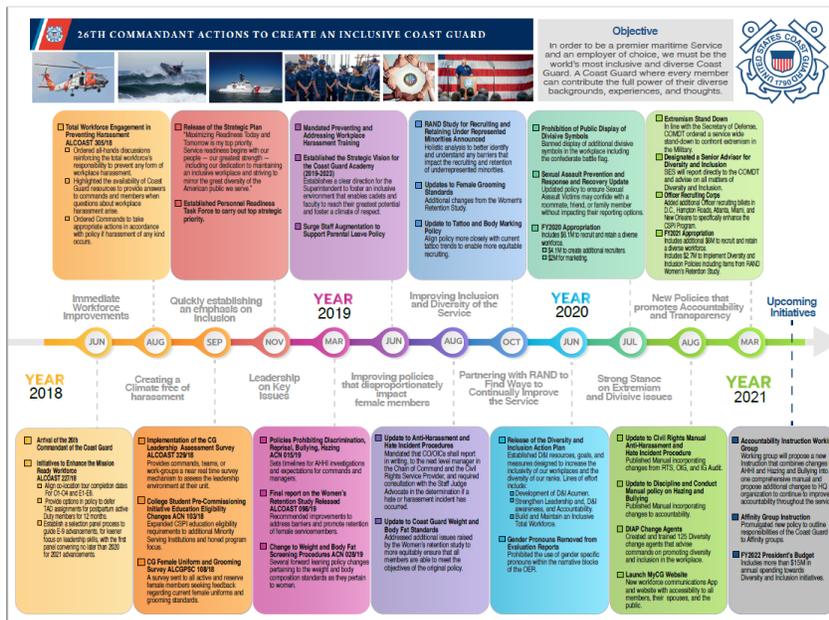
been handled properly by the Coast Guard, but I do want to take a moment to kind-of reinforce a few things that the Admiral said that he has been doing since he has been at the helm.

They are reflected in a document that I have before me. It is called "The 26th Commandant's Actions to Create an Inclusive Coast Guard." These actions include, in summary, creating a climate free of harassment, leadership on key issues, improving policies that disproportionately impact female members, partnering with RAND to find ways to continually improve the service, and a strong stance on extremism and divisive issues.

These are the things the Admiral has implemented since he came into service. There have been other things reflected that have been implemented since before. It is not perfect. We have a long way to go. But I do want to note that there are things being done.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that I can incorporate this document into the record.

Chairman THOMPSON. Without objection, so ordered.  
[The information follows:]



Mr. KATKO. Thank you, sir. Since I am confident that other people are going to deal with some of the other issues, I wanted to take this moment to talk about something I think is critically important, and that is the Arctic.

Recently, Russia assumed the rotating presidency of the Arctic Council. As we know, there are more waters being created with the ice melt going on. It grants them additional influence on efforts to address strategic challenges in the Arctic.

What role will the polar security cutters of the Coast Guard play in countering strategic challenges in the Arctic, Admiral?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Ranking Member Katko, thank you for your question.

Sir, I believe the Coast Guard's role in the Arctic is irrefutable. We are a lead Federal agency. We bring the surface capabilities to the high-latitude regions, both the Arctic and Antarctic, on a persistent recurring basis.

What we don't have is much presence. I have coined the phrase that "presence equals influence." Right now, we are operating a 45-year-old icebreaker called the *Polar Star*, our sole heavy icebreaker in the U.S. inventory, and a medium breaker, the *Healy*, that was built in 2000, not quite as capable but allows us to do science and research work.

Sir, what we need to do is build out this fleet of polar security cutters. You referenced those. With the support of Congress, the second cutter was funded through the 2001 Consolidated Appropriations Act. That is a program of record, 3 ships. There is really a broader conversation to be had, probably, about more polar security cutters or maybe some medium icebreakers, what we might term an Arctic security cutter future ship.

But we absolutely need to be up in the Arctic and down in the Antarctic on a more persistent basis than we are today, because great-power competition is alive and well there. China has operated off the western Arctic, the Alaska Arctic, for probably 6 of the last 9, 12 years. Russia is building out an increasingly large fleet of icebreakers and intends to use the Northern Sea Route essentially as a toll route. There will be freedom-of-navigation issues in the future, and we will have the organic domestic capability to press into that and project our sovereign interests, sir.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you, sir.

Just to follow up on that, what efforts are you making with the Coast Guard to forward-deploy assets and resources in coordination with our allies and partners in the Arctic to ensure our interests are protected?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Ranking Member, each summer for many years, now we have done Arctic Shield from about June 1 until into the fall. That is up in the western Arctic, again, northern Alaska. We will continue to do that. We forward-deploy some MH-65 Jayhawk helicopters, marine inspectors. We communicate and establish relationships with the local communities, the indigenous populations. Obviously, we have to move and work at the pace of the locals and their interests.

We are taking the *Healy*, the medium breaker, and we are doing a pretty historic transit. We are going to do some science work in the Western Pacific, about 30 days. Then we will do a Northwest Passage transit, so up over the north coast of Canada. We will partner with our Canadian allies there. We will have researchers, we will have some British polar sailors on board, and other groups. We will pop out in the Atlantic, probably make a port call over in Greenland, and we will demonstrate that the Coast Guard is in fact an Atlantic-based Arctic Coast Guard as well, bring the ship down through the Panama Canal, back to Seattle.

We have had medium-endurance cutters, in the recent months, over in Greenland exercising with the Dutch, with the French.

They are very eager. We have put a new Coast Guard attaché in Copenhagen to thicken the lines.

When you think about the 8 Arctic nations, Ranking Member, you know, 3—Canada, United States, and Russia—are Pacific-based; the other 5 are solely Atlantic-based. So we are trying to make sure we are touching the entire Arctic Forum/Arctic Council membership.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, how much time do I—I don't believe I have many time left, so I will yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Texas for 5 minutes, Ms. Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Good morning. Thank you so very much, Mr. Chairman. This is a vitally important hearing, and I am delighted to be part of it this morning.

Admiral, welcome again. Congratulations to you. Thank you for the work that the Coast Guard has done.

But let me indicate that I am enormously disturbed, enormously disturbed, by the report and the, seemingly, atmosphere in the Coast Guard. I want to thank Chairman Thompson for very well-documented issues dealing with harassment, bullying, sexual harassment in particular, and the numbers of those Coast Guard officers who are women who are experiencing sexual harassment. When you begin with sexual harassment, you are on the edge of rape and other sexual assault.

This morning, the Vanessa Guillen legislation was again reintroduced. I am an original co-sponsor of that legislation, have been. I think you are aware of that. There is the idea that there be a separate command, a separate process of investigation, under the Department of Defense, for these particular charges, to create an atmosphere where we have a fully competent military team, if you will. That should go for the Coast Guard.

So my first question is, would you fall under that regimen or would you be willing to commit to an independent investigatory structure under the Coast Guard to take these cases?

Women are intimidated. Vanessa Guillen is my neighbor, a neighboring district. Her death was unspeakable. Young women who wanted to be in the service all of their life.

So let me just ask that question. I will just put these other two before you, and you can briefly answer the other ones.

I would be interested in your funding and level of preparedness for drug interdiction and what work you are doing there; and your preparing and funding for hurricane season. You have done great jobs for us in the Southern Region and the Gulf Region with rescues. I would be interested in whether you are capable and have the staffing for that, which is what we are expecting in the near future.

So, if you could answer those questions, I would appreciate it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Admiral.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Good morning, Congresswoman Jackson Lee. It is good to see you, ma'am, as well. I know we have worked very closely in the past on the streets of Houston and other things.

You know, ma'am, on the Fort Hood situation, the Sergeant Guillen investigation, we commissioned a task force in-house to look at that. We actually have 49 action items that we derived from studying that investigation to bring those findings into the Coast Guard, to make sure we are addressing them. They are near-term and short-term, and right now we have a group that is arraying those on how we are going to get after those. That is inside the lifeline, learning from outside the lifeline activity.

So I am not 100 percent sure I am clear on your question. If your question was outside investigative body related to the question about the SecDef and where they are going with Sexual Assault Prevention Response potentially—

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Yes. Would you set that up?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes. I indicated, ma'am, I am open to change there. I think I reaffirmed already my opinion that I do believe the commander needs to stay in that. So I think I would suggest that outside stuff be targeted specifically, if it is going to go down that path, just to sexual-assault-type matters, because commanders' roles are so important in both prevention and response and handling of these from an accountability standpoint.

To your other questions, ma'am, on our preparedness, we are in hurricane season. We have seen Claudette, the third, you know, named storm, pass through the South, through your part of the country and really through New Orleans area and off over the Atlantic.

We are tooled up and ready to go. It has been a uniquely challenging world, as we all know, for all Americans, for all global members of society, but your Coast Guard has been as busy as ever. I think we are as postured as ever to be responsive.

Last year was the busiest Atlantic Basin hurricane season on record, with more than 30 named storms. I think the predictions this year [inaudible] predictions.

Then, last, drug interdiction, ma'am, we remain committed. We commit 4 ships, multiple helicopters down there. We exceed that; we commit about 175 percent of our stated commitment to the Department of Defense. That continues to command my attention. On average, we remove about 440,000 pounds of illicit narcotics destined to American streets, ma'am, every year.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. You have the funding? I also hope that you are very alert as it relates to your cyber space, making sure you have the expertise and also the firewalls to protect your cyber space?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congresswoman, we are building out our cyber work force. We recently just—fully operational capability for the first Cyber Protection Team. There is funding—thank you to the committee and the administration—for a second Cyber Protection Team, a cyber mission team.

That is an increasingly complicated, challenging landscape. Knowing how critically important the maritime transportation system is to the Nation's economy, we have got to own that. I have told Secretary Mayorkas that, you know, we own the maritime piece of all the cyber infrastructure, and we are working diligently, ma'am, to build out our capabilities. That is a work in progress, and it commands my top attention as well.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana for 5 minutes, Mr. Higgins.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Admiral Schultz, for being here today and to the Chairman and Ranking Member for calling this hearing today.

As an Army veteran myself, I understand the importance of diversity of background and skills in the military and how it benefits our Nation's National defense mission. Diversity is indeed one of our Nation's greatest strengths. Yet we must never forget that we are one in the eyes of God, created in his image.

There are more pressing issues this committee must address, like the humanitarian crisis at the border, the criminal crisis at the border, the Constitutional crisis that the border situation is creating, cartel and drug-smuggling crimes, human trafficking, foreign cybersecurity attacks, emergency preparedness, much more.

While many may feel a bit tired, need to take a break from these serious discussions to focus on issues more of a political nature, I think we must take a deep look at the priorities and efforts of this committee. The safety of our Nation is at stake if immediate threats that we face take a back seat to non-life-threatening topics. This committee is not focused on homeland security; it is focused on identity politics that serve as an evasion of responsibility.

One concern many of my constituents in the State of Louisiana have that has not been addressed by this committee or any other committee in the House of Representatives is the Seacor incident that occurred on April 13 of this year.

During this event, the Coast Guard carried out search-and-rescue operations after a severe weather event caused a 129-foot commercial lift boat, owned by the Seacor Marine, to capsize 8 miles off the coast of Louisiana. This incident resulted in 6 confirmed deaths, with 7 crew members still unaccounted for, lost at sea.

We must address legitimate questions regarding the Coast Guard's vessel response plans and concerns of recovery capabilities, as well as the frequency and timeliness of updates for the crew members' families in the event of an incident.

I am not interested in blame. I am interested in what we can do as a Nation to promote marine safety and emergency response by Federal assets like the Coast Guard.

I penned a letter, signed by the entire Louisiana delegation, sent the letter to this committee, requesting a hearing on the Coast Guard's disaster response plans, and we have not heard a word from leadership.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent to present it to the record, a copy of that letter.

Chairman THOMPSON. Without objection, so ordered.

[The information follows:]

LETTER SUBMITTED BY HON. CLAY HIGGINS

*May 13, 2021.*

Speaker NANCY PELOSI,  
*Capitol H232, Washington, DC 20004.*  
 Leader CHUCK SCHUMER,  
*Capitol S221, Washington, DC 20004.*  
 Leader MITCH MCCONNELL,  
*Capitol S230, Washington, DC 20004.*  
 Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY,  
*Capitol H204, Washington, DC 20004.*

SPEAKER PELOSI, LEADER SCHUMER, LEADER MCCONNELL, AND LEADER MCCARTHY: We urge the committees of jurisdiction in the House of Representatives and U.S. Senate hold oversight hearings to examine the response and recovery efforts related to the recent SEACOR Power tragedy in the Federal waters of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico.

During a severe weather event on April 13, 2021, a 129-foot commercial liftboat owned by SEACOR Marine (SEACOR) capsized eight miles off the coast of Port Fourchon, LA. The United States Coast Guard responded to the event and carried out search and rescue operations from April 13 through April 19, 2021. Tragically, the incident resulted in 6 deaths with 7 crewmembers still unaccounted for.

This tragedy has exposed gaps in existing vessel response plans and has raised concerns regarding the recovery efforts, the frequency and timeliness of updates for the crewmembers' families, as well as the time it has taken to remove the vessel from the water. As of the writing of this letter, the vessel still remains capsized in the water—31 days after the incident. This is inexcusable and has resulted in further tragedy for the families who are still awaiting final news of their missing loved ones.

It is imperative that Congress exercise its oversight authority and take steps to review actions taken to ensure policy gaps are fixed and any lessons learned from the tragedy result in more efficient procedures and a higher degree of marine safety in the future.

We ask respectfully that the committees of jurisdiction conduct necessary oversight hearings on this tragedy and opportunities to improve marine safety procedures overall. Congress has an obligation to take a deeper look into emergency response measures to assist and prevent such tragedies in the future. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,

BILL CASSIDY, M.D.  
*United States Senator.*

JOHN KENNEDY,  
*United States Senator.*

CLAY HIGGINS,  
*United States Congressman.*

STEVE SCALISE,  
*United States Congressman.*

GARRET GRAVES,  
*United States Congressman.*

MIKE JOHNSON,  
*United States Congressman.*

JULIA LETLOW,  
*United States Congresswoman.*

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Seacor capsizing was a devastating event. Lives were lost. This is the type of issue that the Homeland Security Committee should address.

Admiral Schultz, God bless you, sir. I know you are here today to discuss a specific topic, so I will not put you on the spot regarding Seacor, and I will only leave you with one request.

Can you commit today to lead a briefing for me, for interested Members of this committee, and for the Louisiana delegation regarding lessons learned from the Seacor Power tragedy and how

the Coast Guard and Congress could work together to ensure the likelihood of such a tragedy is reduced in the future? Can you make that commitment to me today, good sir?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman Higgins, good morning, sir. I echo your sentiments about the tragic confirmed loss of 6 and still 7 missing. Seacor Power was a very difficult, complex case. You have my commitment, sir, for a briefing, absolutely.

You know, we are working with the National Transportation Safety Board, NTSB, regarding investigatory occurrences for that situation. We need to understand what transpired. We are working in a unified command environment right now, as they try to recover and right that vessel. Then that will factor into our understanding of exactly what transpired and how we learn from that.

You know, first and foremost, as the Nation's lead Federal agency for maritime safety, security, and environmental stewardship, we absolutely have to understand that and we have to preclude that from happening again.

Sir, with respect to the families, we worked very closely with NTSB in terms of, you know, kind-of, timing of their arrival and not losing sight of the fact that there were families involved with missing loved ones. They still have unaccounted-for missing loved ones.

Sir, I know—and I will take the hit on this—that, in the social media thing, our public affairs folks put out some tweets that maybe seemed impersonal. We have looked at that and talked to our folks about that. When there are people involved, you know, some of these social media platforms that limit tweets to so many characters don't capture the emotions of all the folks that are suffering loss and hopeful that they may find, in that case, probably not a surviving body but just a body to have, you know, an appropriate funeral.

So, sir, I appreciate the emotion involved in this. You have my commitment to learn from this through the investigatory process. We would be absolutely committed to coming and briefing your staff, or if that is at a hearing, whatever route that is deemed appropriate by the committee, sir, we want to inform into that and try to preclude such tragic occurrences from the future.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Admiral, for that commitment.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman's time has—

Mr. HIGGINS. Let me clarify that I have received many briefings from the Coast Guard headquarters in New Orleans—

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HIGGINS. I thank you for your service.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey—

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON [continuing]. Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this timely hearing on a very, very important topic, and to the Ranking Member as well.

Admiral Schultz, it is clear that much remains to be done to increase diversity in the Coast Guard ranks. Recruitment is a large part of that. In fact, there is a Coast Guard recruitment office in my district in Newark, New Jersey.

So I am interested to know what the Coast Guard is doing to recruit youths from the inner city. How is the Coast Guard supporting these youth once in the service so that you can actually retain them and encourage them to move up through the ranks and not just get them in the door?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman Payne, good to see you, sir. Thank you for the question.

I think the latter part of your question just warrants a little bit of attention. You are absolutely right. We don't want to just recruit folks to the Coast Guard; we want to bring them in and retain them in the Coast Guard. You know, for every coastguardsman we retain, you know, beyond their 4-year initial commitment, track up maybe potentially up to 20 years and beyond, that is a huge win. It takes us multiple recruits to get that.

We have the highest retention of any of the Armed Forces, and that still is a challenge. I am working to find 4,000 Americans that want to enlist in the Coast Guard on an annual basis. We have been challenged to meet that goal year-in, year-out. With COVID this past year, we will probably get to 3,200, 3,300. I will probably spike the football, in a sports analogy, to say that would be very good in the difficulties posed by this last year's set of circumstances confronting the Nation.

But when you look into the recruiting environment, about 28 percent of Americans are eligible to serve in the Armed Forces. About 10 percent of that 28 percent have a propensity to serve. We are competing with the Department of Defense, DOD, services that are recruiting 1,000-plus young men and women on a weekly basis. I am looking for 4,000 on an annual basis.

They are able to throw larger recruiting bonuses. I believe the Army offers a young man or woman \$30,000 to commit to show up at their training facility in the first 30 days. Where I am forced to use bonuses for recruiting is somewhere between \$2,000 and \$7,000, and that is usually in the leanest, bleakest part of the year.

Sir, on our recruiting offices, back in sequestration years, we took about a 50-percent reduction to our recruiting offices. So we are trying to go back to some targeted locations. We worked with Chairman Thompson for one in Mississippi and got that close to right. The Chairman informed me that we didn't get it exactly in the right place, but I am aware of that, and we are, you know, cognizant to make sure we get that 100 percent right next time. We are enabling our recruitings with ability.

So I think it is a work in progress, sir, but you are absolutely correct.

Mr. PAYNE. OK. Thank you.

Admiral Schultz, what can you tell the committee about the Coast Guard's Second Chance Program? How many times in the last 5 years has the Coast Guard utilized the program? Can you provide this committee with the demographic breakdown of those who have been approved for participation and the circumstances of their participation?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Congressman Payne, we do have a Second Chance Program. That is, you know—the purpose is to retain good, solid, first-term performers that have the potential, you

know, maybe had a youthful indiscretion but can move forward on that.

There are some, you know, issues that are not youthful indiscretions—drug use, alcohol use involving a motor vehicle, other things. There are some bright-line things that do not allow us to do that.

I do not have the data in front of me about how many times we have used the Second Chance Program nor the demographics within those cases. I will be sure to respond for the record to that here, if I could, after the fact or to you personally, whichever your preference, sir.

Mr. PAYNE. That would be good.

Admiral SCHULTZ. I am also looking at the Second Chance Program, sir. You know, it is pretty rigorous with certain things, with alcohol use and other things like that. I have asked my team, in recent months here, to explore that and say, do we have this right, given some of the challenges in the Nation and the difficulty-to-recruit environment?

But, sir, we do have it. We do use it. We will give you the data you asked for here at a follow-on opportunity.

Mr. PAYNE. OK.

I see my time is slowly dwindling. So, with that, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi for 5 minutes, Mr. Guest.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral, I want to first tell you how much I appreciate the work of your airmen and seamen, the things that they are doing. I particularly want to talk a few moments about your drug interdiction and some of the successes that you have had over the last few months.

A *Maritime Executive* article referred to the cutter *Mohawk* returning to Key West after having seized 4,000 pounds of cocaine having a street value of nearly \$70 million. That same article talks about the *Campbell* returning home on February 8 to report to her port in Maine, where she had interdicted 11,600 pounds of cocaine worth \$215 million. The *Harriet Lane* had returned also, offloading \$200-plus million in seized cocaine. A week early, the *Gabrielle Giffords* returned to port with \$200 million of cocaine captured in the Eastern Pacific.

Some articles that I found in the *Coast Guard News*: On March 10, an article said that the cutter *Bertholf* returned home, offloading approximately 7,500 pounds of seized cocaine and marijuana, an estimated street value of \$126 million. On March 23, it says the crew of the Coast Guard cutter *Munro* offloaded approximately 8,200 seized pounds of cocaine and 11,450 pounds of marijuana having a value of \$330 million. The last article, from May 19 of this year, says that the Coast Guard cutter *Active* offloaded approximately 11,500 pounds of seized cocaine in San Diego having a street value of \$220 million.

So just those seizures alone, those half-dozen or so major seizures, if my math is correct, is over \$1.3 billion in narcotics that

have been seized and interdicted by the Coast Guard. First, I want to thank you for that.

I also want you to very briefly, if you will, speak on the important role your agency plays in interdiction and stopping drugs prior to them being delivered to our country.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman Guest, thank you for the question, sir, and thank you for highlighting the important work of our extraordinary Coast Guard men and women.

Yes, we interdict about 440,000 pounds—that is about 207, 208 metric tons—on an annual basis, take about 600-plus smugglers off the water. We bring them into the criminal justice system. We feed the interdiction cycle. We develop leads, you know, if there are plea deals cut at the U.S. attorney's offices and in the U.S. criminal justice system, and that feeds the process, sir.

We work with a wide host of international and domestic partners. We work closely with the DEA on developing the intelligence. We work closely with the National intelligence community. We are a named member of the National intelligence community.

We do the predominance of our detection and monitoring work at the Department of Defense command Joint Interagency Task Force—South in Key West that is commanded by a Coast Guard two-flag officer under the SOUTHCOM Commander, four-star Admiral Craig Faller, a DOD combatant command.

Sir, you know, I believe we are some of the most capable, talented folks in the world on this mission. It is difficult. The ocean is vast. If you look at the Eastern Pacific, about 85 percent of the drugs used to come through the Eastern Pacific. We are seeing that split 85/15, from Pacific to Carib, changing a bit. It is about a 65/35 split here.

We have had more activity. You mentioned the *Gabrielle Giffords*. That is a Navy ship. We can take Coast Guard authorities with a small team of 8 to 12 coastguardsmen on a Navy combatant and we can extend our law enforcement authorities.

So we are putting what we can in terms of cutters, we are putting what we can in terms of Airborne Use of Force capability—that is the ability to shoot out engines on fast boats. We are augmenting, you know, our teams at sea, because maintaining detainees at sea while you are continuing to do interdiction missions is challenging work.

It was an extraordinarily difficult year last year, sir, with COVID, sending a ship downrange, with somewhere from 100 to 175 sailors, depending on the ship class, operating with N95 masks and standing their watch doing this mission, sir.

But I am tremendously proud. We are appreciative of the support. I believe it is absolutely critically important work, because it feeds the instability in the Central American quarter that feeds some of the challenges we are experiencing at the land borders here in the United States as well.

Mr. GUEST. Well, as a former prosecutor, I want to commend you and your sailors and airmen for the incredible job that you are doing. I think that it is vitally important to our National security, protecting the homeland, and making sure that we are interdicting those drugs before they actually reach American soil.

So thank you for your hard work and the men and women that serve under you.

Mr. Chairman, at this time, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Cleaver, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLEAVER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate all the hard work that is going on as well, and I don't want to minimize that, Admiral. I think, you know, you have a very difficult job, and I don't want to make it any more difficult. However, you know, I used to see recruitment being done years and years ago, you know, all over, including in the urban core, there were recruitment offices. You know, there used to be a lot of ads on TV that would be directed toward trying to get, you know, an inclusive Coast Guard.

I am wondering now, you know, are there any limitations that would prevent you from doing things like that or do you believe that what you are doing is working and sufficient?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Mr. Cleaver, good to see you, sir. I think the last time I saw was at Mr. Cummings' lying in state, sir.

The question is a great question, sir. You know, there is a fiscal, you know, monetary aspect of how much recruiting and advertising we do. Advertising is quite expensive, and in a \$13 billion Coast Guard budget, you know, comparing to a \$760 billion, \$740 billion DOD, we do not compete in terms of resources and ability to advertise.

We advertise strategically where we can. Some of our best advertising is when we get our Coasties out into the schools to meet folks through our partnership and education programs. We are very excited with the support of Mr. Clyburn and the Hill writ large. We have a new junior ROTC program. We had two junior ROTC programs last year, one out in Camden County, North Carolina, and one down in Miami, the MAST Academy, but we are going to Pinellas County in Florida, we are going to North Charleston. I think that program has the potential for very modest cost input to really get our brand out there.

I mentioned about a 50 percent cut in recruiting offices back in the 2013 sequestration years. That was tough. What we are trying to do—and it is less about the physical office today than it is about the recruiter and the ability to go meet a young recruit in his or her home, maybe in their school, have the mobility.

So we have had a tech revolution. We are close to giving the recruiters the ability to sit down on the couch with an iPad and seal the deal and do the paperwork. Now we have to bring them back to the office. The other offices of the services are a little bit more agile to do their investments earlier on that, but we are getting there, sir.

So recruiting is a top priority for me. Our goals are to recruit 25 percent women, 35 percent underrepresented minorities. We have done actually better on the underrepresented minorities, met or exceeded the goals. We fell short about 20 percent of women when we are striving for 25 percent. But, sir, when you are only recruiting 4,000 a year, moving the needle in an organization of 42,000

does not happen fast. There is obviously annual, you know, attrition and retention, sir. But we are working hard to compete.

We do have 4 new officer recruiters targeting minority officer recruiting. We are sending them to Atlanta, Miami, New Orleans, and Norfolk, Virginia, sir. We are hopeful that may be the start of additional effort in that area as well, sir.

Mr. CLEAVER. Well, thank you, Admiral.

You know, you answered the question exactly the way I would have wanted. I do know that it is a difficult job.

This is not necessarily connected, but I am also interested in the town halls that you once did, or maybe you are continuing to do. I don't have any information that would suggest that you are still doing the town halls. If you are not, could you resume or give us an update on what the status is?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes. Congressman, I am not 100 percent sure I know which town halls, but we have done some town halls with myself and the master chief petty officer early on in our tenure. We haven't done as much lately. We have had some town halls here responsive to, you know, the social unrest, the perceptions of the realities of social justice in America, with our director of civil rights, equal opportunity office. Dr. Dickerson has done that and with some others. We have had senior leaders participate here, if that is what you are referring to, and the work is on-going.

We had them at a little more persistent pace here months back, but, sir, we work very diligently to stay connected with our work force and, you know, there is a technological piece of how broadly we can connect through a work force of, you know, 42,000 active, 9,000 civilians, and about 6,000 reservists, sir, but we do try to keep the lines of dialog open. It is only when we understand what is on our people's minds that we can be responsive to that and strive to better ourselves.

Mr. CLEAVER. Well, I appreciate the direction you are going, sir, and I appreciate you being here today.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey for 5 minutes, Mr. Van Drew.

Mr. VAN DREW. Thank you, Chairman Thompson.

Admiral Schultz, thank you for all the good work that you do and where you have taken the Coast Guard. I am very appreciative of your work, and I look forward to hearing from you about how the service is working to maintain a competitive edge within our military.

I would like to express my strong support. As you know, we have spoken many times for the training center, Cape May Recapitalization Project, which was included in the President's fiscal year 2022 budget. This \$55 million barracks renovation projects the first of four phases which would completely overhaul the outdated 60-year-old facility, which does not provide the services with the necessary infrastructure to fulfill its mission, especially its new mission.

Training Center Cape May is the sole accession point for the Coast Guard's enlisted work force, which consists of roughly 4,200 annual recruits. When the original facilities were built in the 1960's, only men were allowed to enlist in the service. The new bar-

racks would provide equitable berthing and showers and rest room facilities for male and female recruits, which is a necessary change to help fulfill the Coast Guard's mission of increasing diversity and increasing equity. The project would also expand the capacity of the training center to accommodate 5,000 annual recruits, a much-needed increase to support a more resilient Coast Guard.

Admiral Schultz, in your written testimony, you stated that the Coast Guard had made significant strides to recruit, retrain—sorry—recruit, retain, and advance a diverse work force, creating lasting and powerful change, and enhance the culture and climate of the service.

How does the Training Center Cape May Recapitalization Project help the Coast Guard fulfill those goals?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Congressman Van Drew, good morning to you, sir.

You know, clearly, that is our flagship training command for enlisted members of our work force, and there is tremendous history there, but as you said, there is aging infrastructure. When you are in a competitive environment, back to my reference to, you know, 28 percent of Americans eligible to serve and some 10 percent show the propensity to serve, you know, when they explore the services, and these kids are bright, they are smart, they look on-line, it is not hard to take a look at Great Lakes Training Center compared to the Coast Guard Training Center versus the Air Force Recruit Training down in Texas and you see old facilities.

So I think the ability for us to update our training facilities, the ability to create more equitable physical facilities for our women recruits is absolutely an essential part of this recruit and retain conversation we are having, sir. I am very excited that we pushed hard through the Department and the administration to get phase 1, \$55 million in there for the first barracks. The unfunded priority list that I submitted through the Department of OMB to Capitol Hill has phase 2, which is the second barracks up there.

So I am committed, sir, to developing a capital investment plan for the training center, just like we have for our academy, to get after those things where our flagship training institutions are not sort-of forgotten, because they are absolutely part of this conversation about the world's best Coast Guard needs to be the most inclusive Coast Guard. That is having places that attract America's best and brightest that want to be on our team and stay on our team.

Mr. VAN DREW. Thank you, Admiral.

I can appreciate how the service is looking to draw in more recruits, and I support that. I would like to see the current high standards of the service remain in place, and you and I spoke about that when we spoke privately.

What assurances can you give us all that the Coast Guard will not compromise quality recruits with the implementation of its diversity and inclusion plan that will get the best of everything?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman Van Drew, we are a standards-based organization, military service. We are not adjusting any of our standards. We are just working hard to go out and find those men and women from diverse backgrounds, cultural demographics that want to be on our team and, obviously, part of our standards. But we are trying to be an innovative organization. We are trying

to realize, you know, things—you know, a young Black woman that goes to recruit training that spends a lot of time in the pool there and has different hair than her White counterpart, has concerns to that. We don't want that to be a disincentive, so one of those things where we make sure they have the right types of shampoos, the right types of things where we can recognize there are differences, there are cultural differences, there are gender differences. We are trying to be sensitive.

It has nothing to do with standards, sir. We remain standards-based, and what we are trying to do is be informed, though. You know, different folks, we have found some of the Greek fraternities for similar Black members and then brands, and we had very limiting policies about who could enter the service with a brand, a skin brand.

We changed some of those policies because that was precluding very capable, motivated men and women who wanted to serve their Nation from entering our service, and we have revisited many of those things. I think that has all been helpful as we try to be a Coast Guard more reflective of the Nation we are privileged to serve.

Mr. VAN DREW. Well, Admiral, I agree with you. I thank you for the good work and your level of excellence continually and, really, what you have set up for the future. I think the Coast Guard has great—even greater potential under your leadership. So thank you.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. VAN DREW. I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Admiral, let me be clear, in all the discussions that you and I have had, I am sure you have had with any Members of this committee, about diversity and equity, has there ever been a discussion about lowering the standards of admission to the Coast Guard?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Chairman, absolutely not. We have never had that discussion, sir. We, I think, share a commitment that we want to go and find those men and women with a propensity to serve and bring them in the service and put them on a trajectory to be successful, male, female, Black, White, Hispanic, Asian American, Pacific Islander. I want a Coast Guard where every member feels like their shipmates are behind them and pushing them to the next rung on the ladder. There is tremendous opportunity for success, sir, and we will remain standards-based. That has never been part of the conversation, Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. Absolutely. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from New York, Ms. Clarke, for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing today. I thank you, Admiral, for your forthcoming with your answers to our questions today.

I want to start by asking whether preventing harassment, bullying, assault, and retaliation is not just a matter of developing appropriate policies but developing a culture that emphasizes accountability and justice. What have you done as Commandant to ensure perpetrators receive appropriate discipline? Have you as a Commandant prevented perpetrators and those who condone their behavior from being protected and advanced for promotions or ca-

reer promotions or career-enhancing assignments? What do you believe is your role in doing so?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Congressman Clarke, good to see you, ma'am. Good morning.

Yes, absolutely, as the service chief with the responsibility to man, train, and equip the United States Coast Guard's work force, it is absolutely my responsibility. The buck stops with me. What we have tried to do in terms of the Anti-Harassment and Anti-Hate Incident Policy things is policy is part of that. We looked into that and we recognized where we were and where we needed to change, and we have had some cases that have demonstrated that with some rigorous oversight from the DHS IG and from the committee.

As mentioned earlier, we created 39 initiatives to tackle 16 recommendations, 7 recommendations committee. We have actioned all those. Accountability is woven through all that. You know, the standards-based organization, as I referenced earlier in some of the other questions in terms of lowering bars, the standards-based organization has to do and is premised on accountability. We have the Uniform Code of Military Justice from a disciplinary standpoint. We have administrative tools at our discretion to use, and we absolutely, ma'am, will try to create a perception, a reality that there is accountability when folks do things wrong. Have we always gotten that right? As I said in my opening statement, no.

Ms. CLARKE. Well, let me ask, do you believe that there is a culture, especially for those who have risen through the ranks and have the power to hold others accountable, of avoiding saying anything negative about the Coast Guard at the risk of facing professional consequence?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Do I believe there is a pervasive culture, ma'am? No. Do I believe some will hold that perception? Probably so. Is their perception their reality? It may be so. My goal is to create a culture that doesn't tolerate that, a culture where folks are not being treated fairly, appropriately, and that is brought forward. It is a culture of intrusive leadership where leaders don't sort-of wait for problems to go to them, but they are out and about amongst their people, spending time with their folks, having the conversations that would reveal those problems, and then we can act on that, ma'am. It is absolutely an intrusive environment that I am driving toward.

Ms. CLARKE. Wonderful.

So how would you say you have done as Commandant to promote a culture of accountability in which reporting misconduct is not just tolerated but is encouraged?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, ma'am, I would hope that the service and the service members would say I have done a reasonably good job of that. But would I tell you have I got it right? I would tell you I am trying to address many cases from previous, and I don't pass that on my predecessor. On 1 June 2018, I took the reigns of this service and with that whatever came with that. What we have tried to do is go back and understand those cases, propel them forward as learning opportunities, and address matters. I think it would probably be incumbent on, you know, my 57,000 shipmates to better answer that question than me, ma'am.

Ms. CLARKE. Well, do you believe that there exists within the Coast Guard a sort of good old boys' network in which White men look out for, promote, and protect each other? If not, do you believe such a network ever existed? When did it end? What have you done as Commandant to ensure that it does not exist?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, ma'am, when will it end? I don't know. Do I believe it exists in society? Does it exist, is there probably subsets of it in any of the Armed Forces? Yes, ma'am. You know, it is the same conversation with extremism in the ranks. Am I aware of any extremists in our ranks? We had an extremist in our ranks a couple years ago, and he is doing 13.5 years in a Federal penitentiary because we identified him. We acted on that. We worked with the U.S. attorney's office. We disenrolled him from our ranks immediately on prosecution.

So I am absolutely committed to accountability. If there are good old boy networks, as you mentioned, ma'am, then I want to bust them up. This is what our 125 cultural change agents that are getting outside training are going to do, tied to our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that we rolled out.

We started on this trajectory, Congresswoman, on 1 June 2018. My guiding principals talked about a more diverse Coast Guard, a more inclusive Coast Guard being imperative, a commander's priority from Day 1. That was on the street when I showed up in the office, and the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan was in the works in subsequent months. We are waiting for a RAND study that will help us understand barriers to retention for underrepresented minorities. That will come in July.

I created a Personnel Readiness Task Force year one that actioned the holistic RAND study for women, and we kept them in place. That was a 1-year program that now is in its third year, because I want to put that same level of diligence on the underrepresented study because in the past, studies have been shelf wear. I want studies to be causes and catalysts for action, ma'am.

Ms. CLARKE. Well, thank you, Admiral, for your answers.

Let me yield back to the Chairman. I appreciate it. Thank you.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. The gentlelady yields back.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Norman for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORMAN. Thank you, Chairman.

Admiral Schultz, I want to thank you for appearing today. I think this is the first time that a Commandant has appeared before the Committee of Homeland Security.

I just want to thank you for your stance. I appreciate you coming to the office. You have been very direct. You have been very adamant that the standards have not been compromised, that you want the best people, and you want people who want to be in the Coast Guard. I just appreciate your dedication to the job, and it shows when we—during our conversation at least.

I know the recruitment goal in 2019 was not what you wanted it to. I think you had a goal of 3,600 and you had recruits less than 600 that you missed. So, hopefully, we can help you do that. I think the Coast Guard is the best kept secret.

We have got some serious threats; namely, immigration. We have got close to 1.2 million to 1.6 million that will be in our country

illegally. We have got drugs coming in this country, and I don't think there is anybody that is equipped to handle it like the Coast Guard.

As you look at the threats, you know, we have got illegal fishing. We have got the Russians conducting sophisticated joint exercises. They enjoy access to 40 icebreakers compared to the 1.5 icebreakers of our fleet. In the South China Sea, the Chinese Coast Guard is implementing a new maritime law designed to escalate tensions in the region. You know, the list goes on and on.

Can you elaborate on the recent Iranian harassment in the Strait of Hormuz and how it affects the Coast Guard's mission?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman Norman, good to see you this morning, sir.

Let me just start by acknowledging we have never been busier. I would say the demand for Coast Guard services domestically and across the globe has never been higher. To your—through our conversation about standards-based and Chairman Thompson's point, sir, I ask young men and women from all walks of life to do dangerous things. That is jump on a narcotics-laden drug submarine, jump out of a helicopter to pull somebody from the water, jump out of a burning ship. Many of your membership here from the committee are from Coastal States, and I think they understand just how, you know, treacherous the work we can do. You know, we don't go out on many good days. We go out on tough days and do tough things. So we have to remain standards-based, and we will remain standards-based.

In terms of the Iranian situation, sir, you know, we have 250-plus men and women stationed in Bahrain. They are under the tactical command of the Navy's Fifth Fleet, which is a support and naval command to the U.S. Central Command Commander, General Frank McKenzie. We operate 6 patrol boats there. We just forward-deployed our first 2 replacements of the 6, 2 fast response cutters, to replace 2 of the 30-year-old Island-class patrol boats. Our men and women stand the watch, sir.

There has been recent multiple news events of having interactions with the Iranians. They have upped that game. That has become increasingly an aggressive adversary, and our folks show great discretion. They are very much completely integrated with the naval team there.

We have a team of what we call maritime engagement trainers that train allied and coalition partners on naval procedures in the region, law enforcement procedures that is very effective. Then I have an advanced interdiction team, a team of 12 people that come out of our—what we call our maritime securities [inaudible]. Those are our highest-end assaulters. We have a team in Chesapeake, Virginia, a team in San Diego. That team forward-deployed is on a rotational basis with the Marines, Expeditionary Marines, the U.S. Navy Seals, and the Coast Guard AIT. Sir, they were just tied into, I think it was the USS Normandy, in one of the largest weapons cache seizures. It encapsulated the entire flight deck of that DDG with just, you know, shoulder launch weapons, Chinese-built Kalashnikov-type rifles.

So we are engaged in the area, and it is an increasingly difficult Iranian counterpart operating these fast interceptor attack craft,

and our men and women are highly trained, professional, and truly integrated with their Navy colleagues in the region, sir.

Mr. NORMAN. Well, let me ask you this. As it relates to the cartels and the huge problem this country faces with the illegal immigrants coming across the lines along with drugs, what can we do in Congress to help you patrol the area and to try to correct the situation that is totally out of control now?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman, I would answer that in 2 parts. I believe—and I have tried to link this in various Congressional testimonies and other, you know, public speaking events, that I believe the counter-narcotics work we do both in the Eastern Pacific and in the Caribbean Basin is directly tied to the instability, the corruption that occurs in the Central American corridor, that occurs in Mexico.

So I think continued support to the Coast Guard counter-narcotics efforts is important to affect, you know, why are people leaving to try a border region. Why are they leaving Central America, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador? It is because of corruption. They can't find a better life for their kids, and they make that difficult, dangerous choice.

I believe for the other part of that answer, sir, is, you know, I have got 185 coastguardsmen today supporting our DHS colleagues at the border, 38 medical professionals, 150 general purpose Coasties that are standing the watch so that Border Patrol agents can be on the front lines.

Sir, I think the best way to keep the Coast Guard responsive in that space is about a 3 to 5 percent annual budget growth. We weren't part of the 2018 12 percent bump-up that the Armed Forces got for readiness, but we are getting after that in the 2021 appropriations, sir, and it is just some positive trajectory on the operations and support side the Coast Guard budget allows us to continue to build the Coast Guard the Nation needs, sir.

Mr. NORMAN. Thank you for being a voice of reason. Thank you for your straightforwardness, and really appreciate your dedication to a great arm of the military, and hopefully we can strengthen you in the future with funding and other sources.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Swalwell for 5 minutes.

Mr. SWALWELL. Thank you, Chairman. I want to thank Admiral Schultz.

I have been to the Alameda Coast Guard facility just outside my district, and I have seen the terrific work that the men and women who serve the Coast Guard do. I want to thank you for that. You are right, there is no easy day. You are not called for celebratory events. You are called because of a crisis, and I have seen that.

Admiral Schultz, I want to talk about the Culture of Respect report that in 2015 found serious cultural issues within the service. However, the report and its findings were never released service-wide. It recommended that its underlying analysis be repeated every 3.5 to 4 years, which would mean the next report would be 2018 to 2019, but that report has not been issued.

Is that report going to be coming? If not, could you just give us a reason why?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Congressman Swalwell, good morning, sir. Thank you for taking an interest in your California coast-guardsmen. They do a great job. I will be out there the end of next week here to finish the second part of the Pac Area change of command. We just—Linda Fagan left there, became our first female four-star in the history of the Coast Guard last Friday, and we will be back there to in-State Vice Admiral McAllister.

But, sir, the Culture of Respect report was an internal report document created by my predecessor, the 25th Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Zukunft, and that report was, you know, was an internal product that he made a decision on what they did or didn't do with that. I don't believe that was ever intended as an external report. I think folks who grabbed that and said we are burying that report, I don't see it that way. I would say we have dove into these same type of issues. That recommendation about continuing that report was a recommendation.

You know, would it be wise for us to look at something similar? You know, when I came in, we had a team look back at the findings of the Culture report. I think we pulled findings and information from that forward into our decision making, into our crafting of the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that we rolled out summer of 2020, sir.

I think, you know, the findings, some of that is reflected in the women's holistic study conducted by RAND that we received the results in 2019. I believe some of the findings will be reflected in the RAND URM study that will be forthcoming in July.

But, sir, I would say, I am not going to get into the predecisional decisions of my predecessor, but that was not a report, I believe, that was intended for outside. Some will try to spin it that way or say we were burying that. I don't see it that way at all, sir.

Mr. SWALWELL. Will you undergo a new report or a new study to generate a new report?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman, we are always looking at studies. What I would like to see is what the sufficiency and the quality of the RAND report is, because I think that is a multimillion dollar investment for that report. We are going to take the Personnel Readiness Task Force actioning on those 8 to 12 bodies that I brought on board to action the holistic women's report and take the same approach.

We have already actioned, I mentioned, the mentoring application that we are using. I have already talked about officer recruiters in 4 key locations. But, I mean, if we don't find that to be sufficient in something like a Culture of Respect like report would be useful, sir, absolutely. I am hesitant to make a commitment, because we made a significant investment to get a report that is imminent here in the next 30 days or so that I hope will put us on the trajectory to continue to make positive change in our service, Congressman.

Mr. SWALWELL. Admiral, my Congressional district in the East Bay is one of the most diverse in the country. This past weekend, we celebrated and sent off over a dozen individuals to the military

academies, all of the academies except the Coast Guard. It was a diverse class that reflected the district.

What can we do as Members of Congress to help the Coast Guard recruit the best and brightest, particularly those that come from disadvantaged backgrounds or minority communities? I understand the diversity report that you just presented, but how can Congress assist you in making sure the Coast Guard looks like, you know, the country it seeks to protect?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes, Congressman. Thank you for the question. The fact that you know you had, you know, how many service scouting members destined to their respective academies, it is good that you know that. What I like to—and you know you didn't have any Coast Guard. I like to make sure Members of Congress that have a Congressional process to screen and award Congressional nominations put into that conversation, hey, there is another academy. It does not have a Congressional appointment, but it is the Coast Guard Academy. I think when you look at our academy, it is almost 40 percent women. We are really excelling on that front better than any of the other service academies. There is a great news story there.

I am looking at the demographics of the in-bound class that will report here in the next week or so here. We have 285 students that have accepted appointments to the Coast Guard Academy, plus 8 international students. 114 are female, that is 40 percent; 104 are underrepresented minorities, that is 36 percent. That is the largest number of underrepresented minority students in the history of the Academy to ever accept it.

So there is some good news stories. There are 43 Asian American—Asian American/Pacific Islanders in that subset, 28 African Americans. Now, the Chairman's point, 28 of 285 is 10 percent. That is not reflective of society. It is better where we are in the 6 percent, and we have to continue to improve there. These conversations about the Academy not being inclusive are not helping.

So I have absolutely tried to turn that story around and make sure everybody sees the Academy as the most inclusive institution of all the service academies. Hispanic, 25 Hispanic Americans. As the demographics of America change, 25 of 285 is not a winning success story, sir. We need to be up nearly 18 percent of society that is represented by Hispanics, marching toward 50 percent in the coming decade. So that is an area that is drawing my attention.

So, Congressman, what you can do, I believe, is make sure folks are aware of the Coast Guard Academy. What we can do is make sure—your fellow Californian, Chairwoman Roybal-Allard from Appropriations Committee, has said, sir, Commandant, you have got to give me some materials. You have got to give me some action stuff. You have got great materials. Help me put those in my office so I can encourage these kids who may not get the Naval Academy appointment, tell them about you and show them something that gets them excited, sir.

So I own that. We will work with you to figure out how we can help you be an ambassador for our academy that is a merit-based, non-nominative [inaudible]. The non-nominative piece is tricky. We have 1,100 students, so we bring in that 285, try to figure out how you prorate that across 535 Members between the House and the

Senate, and you probably need an actuarial to work that. But Chairman Thompson has continued to challenge us to think through that and talk through that, and we will continue that discussion with his legislation that is currently enacted and herein we are responding to.

Mr. SWALWELL. Thank you, Admiral.

I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Admiral, one of the things, as you know, is we have been good at getting people into the Academy, but we have had challenges retaining them. So I would hope that you have a plan, which you have alluded to, to work on making sure that we give those people coming into the Academy every effort to complete it. You have referenced that when Congressman Payne talked about it, and I would encourage you to continue to do that.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Chairman, if I could 1 second, you know, we—absolutely, sir, you are absolutely correct. You know, when I came through the Coast Guard Academy in 1983, it was less than 50 percent graduation rate. You know, we are about 87 percent. So we are keenly focused on those young men and women that we send through an American taxpayer-funded education to be successful there. There is some things that, obviously, are trap door issues and they can't get through, but we want folks to get through to the extent they can adhere to our core values, and we want to make sure that is equitable and, you know, that the numbers of folks that are trained are reflective of—you know, they are comparable. They are not, you know, biased toward one group or another group. We are absolutely studying that, sir.

We are using the Academy scholarship program, which is a preparatory year, 25 percent of that incoming class of 285, 20 percent into our Coast Guard Academy scholars to make sure folks have the right academic level of preparation to be successful. The Academy has done some really good jobs, writing coaches, outside resources. We made that investment, let's make sure we get them out the door.

Then, really, let's make sure they are successful out in the fleet. I went back this year in my leadership. Rather than talking at the cadets, I moderated a panel with a diverse group of Coast Guard junior officers out in the fleet to make sure the young cadets that are getting ready to graduate and the cadets in the junior years see a Coast Guard that is welcoming to them, regardless of their background, their culture, their heritage. I want everyone to realize the Coast Guard is out there, we need you, and we are committed to you, male, female, whatever demographic, sir.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Iowa for 5 minutes, Mrs. Miller-Meeks.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you also, Admiral Schultz, for your service and your answers to this point. I am a 24-year Army veteran, but also a commissioner for my Wapello County Veterans, and our director is a Coastie. So you are well-represented in our locality.

You have heard about the crisis and the cartels at the border, but I am going to turn our attention to a little bit different part

of the globe. It is imperative that the United States counter the People's Republic of China's or the Chinese Communist Party's growing influence and ambitions as evidenced in its poor Silk Road efforts.

What is the Coast Guard doing to augment the development and deployment of maritime domain awareness technologies, as well as surface presence capabilities in the Arctic?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Thank you for the question. I am glad we have a coastguardsman that is tied into the veterans organization up there. That is fantastic, and thanks for acknowledging that individual.

Ma'am, we are absolutely part of the conversation on how do you temper war in a great power of competition, National Security Strategy we find ourselves, National Defense Strategy, we bring a lot to that. You know, the Coast Guard did a tri-service maritime strategy advance at sea with the CNO, Admiral Gilday; Commandant of the Marine Corps, Dave Berger; myself, we put that out last fall. That talks about the increasingly important role of where the Coast Guard fits into the deployment of integrated all-domain naval power across the globe.

We have been a Pacific-based Coast Guard for more than 150 years. I believe what we—when you talk about the One Belt, One Road; the Polar Road; Silk Road, all those different Chinese initiatives, what we bring is a people-to-people relationship difference. You know, out in Oceania, the Pacific Island nation's Federated States of Micronesia, the CNMI, that region of the world, you know, these nations derive 50 percent plus of their gross domestic product from the ocean. They have very little enforcement capabilities. They are subject to illegal fishing, IUU fishing, by powerful distant water nation-states, the most worse aggressors being the Chinese.

What we can do is we can come in and we can capacity-build. We can help them understand the threats of their ecosystems. We can help them develop their law enforcement capabilities. We can partner. The Australians have a patrol boat program. We can work with the Australians on training, on maintenance. We have deployed National Security Cutters. National Security Cutter Kimball came back from operations out near Fiji recently. We have 3 Fast Response Cutters. These are new patrol boats that I will be commissioning in Guam here in the coming weeks. They have 10,000-mile expeditionary range so we can get out and do things with those boats that we couldn't do with their predecessors, the Island-class patrol boats. We are renaming our sector in Guam as really forces forward-deployed in Guam, because they are increasingly part of this conversation about how do you temper and increase the aggressive antagonistic coercion of China.

I believe what we bring, ma'am, as United States Coast Guard, a recognized world class Coast Guard, is we bring a credible voice. When we say Coast Guards, you know, what I see the Chinese government using is using their Coast Guard as the actioning arm in the South China Sea and the East China Sea. Their PLA and Navy sort-of stays at a distance. It is the Chinese Coast Guard, the people's maritime militia, that is used to run down Vietnamese, Indonesian fishermen in disputed spaces.

We can come in and say, hey, the world's best Coast Guards don't operate that way. We follow modern maritime governance. We follow the international rules-based order. I believe that is what we bring them. We don't bring a ton of capacity, but strategically utilized, you know, some deployments, the authorities building a like-minded coalition of partner nations, NGO's, academia on this IUU fishing threat, I think the Coast Guard is an absolute critical enabler to that whole-of-Government fight in this great power model we find ourselves, ma'am.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Thank you.

Mr. Chair, I yield the balance of my time to Representative Guest.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady yields time to Mr. Guest.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral, I want to talk very briefly about the Arctic. The United States has been an Arctic nation since we purchased Alaska in 1867, but the Federal Government has not invested in new icebreakers since the *Healy* was commissioned in 1999. The Coast Guard icebreaker fleet has a total of 2 ships, the *Polar Star* and the *Healy*. Meanwhile, Russia has the largest icebreaking fleet in the world, numbering over 40 ships, with 3 more under construction and a dozen planned in the next decade.

Could you please speak on the importance of investing in new icebreakers and what we are seeing to implement the plan that was put in place by the previous administration that outlined the construction of 6 new icebreakers?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman Guest, thank you for the question. You are absolutely correct. We are woefully underinvested in high-latitude capability capacity in terms of icebreakers. The good news story is I believe this is a bipartisan, bicameral issue on Capitol Hill. It commanded the attention of the former administration. It commands the attention of the 46th President's administration. We are having very constructive conversations.

I would say there was a clear hand-off of the baton about the importance of having increasing U.S. presence in the high-latitude regions. Now, we have got to build these ships, and we haven't built an icebreaker here, a heavy icebreaker, in more than 45 years. It is unique steelwork. We have awarded a contract to VT Halter in the spring of 2019. Steel should start being cut in the coming months. That is a program of record 3 ships. Earlier, I alluded to 2 being funded.

There is really a conversation that needs to happen, and I have had these conversations with the former National Security Council and continue to have these conversations with the current National Security Council. But, really, it is probably 4 to 6 heavy icebreakers is what we really need, and we need some medium breakers.

The good news is we have conditioned the space. My predecessors, the 25th, 24th, 23d Commandant, talked for over a decade about the importance of more icebreaking capacity. Now, we, I think, convinced, you know, those folks that are decision makers in the political realm of the importance and how we go about building the ships. So if we can maintain momentum, continue discussions

about what a really capable United States Arctic nation looks like in terms of capacity, I think we will get to a better place.

The Navy, the Air Force, the other services are obviously keened in on the Arctic. The Arctic, you know, presents a very high-risk vulnerable approach. The NORTHCOM Commander, General VanHerck, talks about the Arctic all the time in terms of the risk we see, Russian long-range bombers operating off Alaska in increasingly high numbers and increasing volume.

So there is a lot of geostrategic importance in the Arctic, sir, and I think we are getting after it. You know, if we can ramp up the pace, that is absolutely—I would welcome that discussion. But right now, we are on a much better trajectory than we have been.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from New Jersey for 5 minutes, Mrs. Watson Coleman.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the Ranking Member for bringing us together for this really important meeting.

Admiral, it is good to see you again. I really appreciated the conversation that we had in my office. I want you to know that I have great respect for your mission, for your leadership, and you know where I stand as it relates to making sure that you have the fleet that you need. I am 100 percent in support of it.

But I would like to focus—refocus our attention on the purpose of today's hearing, which has to do with achieving diversity, equity, and accountability within the service.

I know that you are aware that in December 2018, the Office of Inspector General report substantiated the allegations of retaliation against Kimberly Young-McLear, lieutenant commander, in violation of the Military Whistleblowers Protection Act. Additionally, the Majority staff report issued by this committee and the Committee on Oversight and Reform made clear that the lieutenant commander's allegations of harassment and bullying were never fully investigated.

I also understand that the captain who allegedly harassed and bullied her has since retired from the Coast Guard. However, there are others still within the Coast Guard who allowed her allegations to go uninvestigated and who failed to protect her from retaliation.

It is imperative that the Coast Guard holds these leaders accountable for retaliation and ensure survivors are made whole. It is important for us to have these plans and these intentions and this training, but the consequences of behavior is vitally important as we try to improve our system and the culture within our system.

So I want to ask you, what specifically has the Coast Guard done to hold individuals accountable for the failures that occurred in this case? What has been done to hold individuals accountable in other cases of substantiated retaliation?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Congresswoman Watson Coleman, ma'am, it is good to see you, and I enjoyed the opportunity to come chat with you in your office, and thanks for your frankness.

You know, ma'am, this case that you reference to in the 2018 DHS IG whistleblower case, obviously a landmark case, and, you know, that came to my attention about 5 months into my assign-

ment here. I made a statement—it came to my attention that the whistleblower report had dropped when I was at a press event at the National Press Club, and I said we absolutely have to thank whistleblowers and I own the situation, and we are going to have to get after-action on that.

Ma'am, I have studied that case at length. There were 3 investigations. The first investigation was convened by the superintendent at the Academy to look into Ms.—you know, then Lieutenant Commander Young-McLear, now Commander Young-McLear's assertions or allegations. It was investigated. It recommended additional investigation.

The then-assistant superintendent called for—and this is in a timely fashion, a very responsive fashion, called for a subsequent investigation, a climate investigation. That was not the optimal or the artful tool for that subsequent investigation. It had, you know, meaningful findings that painted a picture of the relationship between the faculty member, Ms. Young-McLear, and her boss, and there was some issues there, but it was not the right tool.

Our subsequent changes to our anti-harassment, anti-hazing incident policy will clarify that you do not use a climate survey, climate investigation in forthcoming cases. That was not an appropriate tool. There was—you know, the assistant sup subsequently departed the Academy in the subsequent months. His successor came in. Another allegation came in. Another investigation was triggered. This time it came to the headquarters level, though, but you talked about the substantiated findings.

We had a Coast Guard GS-15 former lieutenant colonel of the Army who did the investigation, and she found—you know, her findings were there were, you know, blatant acts of discrimination, bullying, but when reviewed in the whole—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I am sorry, Admiral. I have a couple of questions.

I know that you are—there has been substantial improvement to the investigation process, who investigates and how it is investigated. I am concerned with when you find substantiated allegations, what are the consequences to the individuals that either perpetrated the harassment or the discrimination or allowed it and didn't do anything about it? What are the actions that were taken?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes, ma'am. I think in this case it is kind-of critically important to that, so just to finish. So Ms. Davis' investigation painted the picture. You are familiar what she said, considered the environment to be intimidating, correct. She also went on to say she did not recommend disciplinary action.

I reviewed each and every one of those investigations, ma'am, and in that time line that transpired, it started back in, you know, 2014, 2015, through 2018, the officer, the captain at the Academy, the department head, had since been reassigned inside the Academy, subsequently reassigned to the R&D Center, put a retirement letter in. There was not sufficient grounds for me to take disciplinary action or administrative action. So what I focused on was corrective action.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. So, sir, we do acknowledge the fact that she was the victim of harassment and bullying. Is that right?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Right. The Chairman asked you this question, but you artfully dodged the yes or no. Has there been a public apology specifically to her on this issue? In addition, sir, would you be willing to issue a written apology for the record on this? That is simply a yes or no.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congresswoman, I am not sure it is as simple as a yes or no question. I would say I sent the four-star Vice Commandant to the Coast Guard Academy early in 2019, and he did issue a verbal apology to the commander in front of her faculty members and peers.

I was up there subsequent weeks at a leadership address, I talked about my most recent, and I addressed the cadet corps. The first question I got was from Commander Young-McLear, then Lieutenant Commander Young-McLear. I stated that the Coast Guard had not done right by her and that was unfortunate and we are actioning that and moving forward, ma'am.

You know, will I issue a written apology? That is a tricky business in the service. The Chairman asked me if I would apologize up-front to men and women that were wronged, absolutely so. We are in a scheme of good order and discipline military uniform justice—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you.

Admiral SCHULTZ. We have a 57,000 work force, ma'am. You know, this is a tricky space, but I have apologized—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Yes, it is a tricky space, sir. I am sorry, it is a tricky space, but we cannot have people who are trying to serve our country in this capacity or any to be harassed or discriminated against because they are a woman or a minority or a gay or whatever.

So where we find that, not only do we sort-of articulate our—that it is unacceptable to have this culture, there have got to be consequences, because if there are no consequences, there is no changed behavior, and simple reassignment is not really a consequence.

I want to know what—

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady's time has expired.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Pfluger, for 5 minutes.

Mr. PFLUGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral, thank you for your service to this country, for keeping our borders safe, our country safe, for what you have done throughout your career, for what the entire Coast Guard does for leading us through some difficult times.

As a military veteran, as a service academy graduate myself from the Air Force Academy, I also know what it means to attend one of those institutions and to train our folks to be resilient, ready, and lethal when needed.

We have heard quite a bit about the threats we are facing in our country—China, Russia, Iran, the dangerous drug cartels. It appears from my perspective, Admiral, that we really—and with 20-plus years of service, that we are really facing unprecedented threat levels everywhere around the world.

I am very interested to hear, from your perspective, what is the greatest threat facing our homeland? I have some follow-on ques-

tions to this. So, what is the greatest threat facing the homeland right now?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Congressman, thanks for the question. Thanks for your service.

You know, sir, it is—that is a difficult question, you know. The National Defense Strategy, there is an interim strategy, and Secretary Austin is working with the senior military team. I sit not as a bylaw member of the Joint Staff, but at the courtesy of the Chairman and the SecDef at the table, and I think we are trying to get our arms around what the new National security apparatus, the President's team, about what that strategy looks like.

I think the pacing threat will likely remain China. I think Russia, you know, and what we have seen in recent cyber activities is clearly troubling, the President having recently met with President Putin, and it speaks to the urgency there.

You know, I think about it through the Coast Guard lens. You know, \$5.6 trillion, 30 million jobs are tied to the domestic marine transportation system, where, you know, 90 percent, 95-plus percent of our goods enter our Nation through our ports and waterways, 360 ports, 25,000 miles of waterways.

So from a Coast Guard standpoint, it is all of the above. You know, we need to project Coast Guard capacity and capabilities to support the combatant commanders in the Arabian Gulf that we talked earlier about, in the East China/South China Sea.

We just had a National Security Cutter come back from a 6-week deployment. They were up in the Black Sea as Russia was mounting troops here, as we all follow in the news. We were able to send a cutter in there. We worked in the—great success story. We worked with the Georgians, Ukrainians. We transferred excess defense article, former Coast Guard, got boats to them. They came out and worked with us. It was a show of NATO allied force and partnership collaboration.

So I would be pressed to say I think it is an amalgamation of threats. It is the great power of competition. The Middle East, where we are trying to draw down forces and the President has declared we are drawing down forces, that is in his wheelhouse, and we understand that. The Pentagon is acting on that. I think we have to pay attention to all these things.

So it is a multidimensional threat landscape, and my goal is to prepare Coast Guard forces to be put into the fight against all those threats.

Mr. PFLUGER. Admiral, thank you for keeping your eye on the ball and wading through an environment that we can get sidetracked with issues that take our eye off the ball.

Over the past couple of months, we have seen increased Russian aggression, including cyber attacks that you just mentioned on our critical infrastructure, tens of thousands of Russian troops that are posted up on the Ukrainian border, which is the largest build-up we have seen even before the illegal annexation of the Crimea.

The administration stated they were going to respond to this build-up by sending 2 U.S. Navy destroyers to the Black Sea, but after Putin objected, we turned those ships around to appease the Russians. You know, this stand-down signals a weakness and a lack of resolve, American resolve, from my perspective, on this.

What do you believe that it signals to our adversaries?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Congressman, I would tell you, I don't know—you know, there is a requirement when you enter the Bosphorus Straits to make notifications as a courtesy you are going there. There was open press reporting that talked about, you know, the Navy is sending ships. The Navy wasn't sending ships. I know our National Security Cutter Hamilton was in the Black Sea in the wake of that. So we did have a U.S. combatant there that happened to have a Coast Guard racing stripe on board, and they did some very important work as they counterclockwise navigated the Black Sea, partnering with many key ally partners there.

So I am going to withhold any political judgment on that, sir. But I would tell you, I believe the Sixth Fleet Commander, the NAVEUR Commander put a U.S. surface capability there. Sir, I don't think there is an intimation, but I believe the work of this hearing that talks about, you know, an inclusive Coast Guard and my ability to action those combatant commander requirements and homeland requirements are absolutely the same conversation.

People are our business. I need to find the best and brightest of America from all walks of life and backgrounds that are able and want to serve, and I am going to put them in the fight, sir. So these are mutually reinforcing conversations, and I am committed to both.

Mr. PFLUGER. Admiral, thanks for that.

Let me just end by saying that the amount of drugs that are entering this country are just incredibly alarming, and I appreciate the work that you and the Coast Guard does, and would urge you to continue to do that. It is affecting my district. The amount of fentanyl that has entered the State of Texas in the last 4 months is enough to kill millions of people, and we have to continue to fight against that. I appreciate what the Coast Guard does every single day in that fight as part of homeland security. I appreciate you keeping your eye on the ball in the midst of a chaotic environment.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman, we pay great attention to numbers with the COVID deaths, and that is a tragic, terrible tragedy, and we are on a healthier course. Ninety thousand, you know, overdoses in drug-related deaths last year, that is another number we need to pay attention to, and the Coast Guard is just one of many agencies. There is a prevention piece and there is an interdiction supply piece, and we are absolutely committed to that fight, sir.

Mr. PFLUGER. Thank you, Admiral.

Mr. THOMPSON. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from California for 5 minutes, Ms. Barragán.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing. Thank you, Admiral Schultz, for joining us today.

This year, I was appointed to the Coast Guard Board of Visitors. This board is tasked with making recommendations on the workings of the Coast Guard Academy regarding, among other things, recruitment and retention, including diversity, inclusion, and issues regarding women specifically. So today's discussion is of

great interest to me, particularly after the committee's 2019 examination of serious cultural issues at the Academy and the clear indications that more work remains to be done there and across the entire service.

Specific to the Academy, in a 2018 survey, almost half of the female cadets reported having been sexually harassed, and reports of sexual harassment and unwanted sexual conduct have increased among male as well as female cadets at the Academy since 2016.

Admiral Schultz, the Coast Guard's recently issued report, "Sexual Assault in the U.S. Coast Guard for Fiscal Year 2020", shows us that the overwhelming majority of survivors of sexual assaults in fiscal year 2020 were women.

What percentage of these survivors are women of color?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congresswoman, I would have to get back with you on that. I do not have that specific data in front of me, but I will ensure that we reach back to your staff, to the committee with that as soon as possible, ma'am.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. I appreciate that.

Do you happen to know if you are seeing any trends in the data?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congresswoman, I think when we look at the sexual assault data, and we respond through a lens called Sexual Assault Prevention, Response, and Recovery, we updated our policy to focus on the recovery of victims as well. You know, (A), any one sexual assault, sexual harassment case is too many. You know, the trend, there is an uptick this year from last year. If you go back 5, 6 years, it is on a slow glide slope, you know. Some would attribute, you know, more comfort in reporting. I think that is a tricky thing to do.

You know, I believe we have created a more open environment to report. We have some ability now where you can, you know, confide in a friend as you try to navigate whether to report, restricted, unrestricted reports. We are working hard to eradicate sexual assaults, sexual harassment from our ranks, as are the other services. We are working about, you know, the military justice and anxiously waiting to see where Secretary Austin steers us.

But it is on-going work, ma'am. You know, with the 45 percent statistic at the Academy, I have met with the Academy faculty, and I have said, if that is, in fact, a true statement reflective of the cadet corps, then I wouldn't be able to go home on a Friday afternoon unless I did something that day to drive that number from 45 percent to 44 percent to 0 percent. I have put my voice against that to say, is that an adherent statistic? I hope that is not reflective.

I would invite any Member of the committee—I salute your willingness to be on the Board of Visitors and encourage—we reactivated that. As an external body, it is not easy with our academy in New London to get that connection, ma'am, but I am committed to that. That is why we have reinstated it. I welcome the Chairman or any of the Members to come up there and see the Academy. It is an energizing place. But we have areas to improve, ma'am, and we are working on that.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you, Admiral.

Would you agree that sexual harassment jeopardizes readiness and mission accomplishment?

Admiral SCHULTZ. One thousand percent, yes.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. That it also weakens trust within the ranks and erodes unit cohesion?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Same answer, ma'am.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Well, thank you for acknowledging that, because one of my colleagues who earlier stated this hearing wasn't a priority, I think our National security is a priority, and this goes directly to the National security of this country.

Admiral Schultz, we know that the women, and women of color in particular, are underrepresented in the Coast Guard ranks. How can they feel comfortable staying in or even joining the Coast Guard if they don't feel confident that their complaints will be taken seriously and that justice will be served?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, ma'am, what we need to do, Congresswoman, is we need to make sure, (A), they are treated with respect and dignity, and when they have concerns or issues, that we are responsive to those. I am hoping that these 125 change agents, which are about 85 percent to completion, as we start deploying them here in the coming weeks and they are having the difficult conversations here raising the diverse and inclusive acumen of our leaders, of our coastguardsmen, I think that is going to be a positive step for that.

Then to the questions from Mrs. Watson Coleman and others about accountability, we absolutely have to be an organization that is focused on accountability, and we will be that. Have we always got that right? We have not, but we are trying, and we will—you have my commitment. I know it is not—my commitment and it stops below me. This is the commitment of the Coast Guard senior leadership team, and we are working with our chief petty officers who are critically enabling body. They are our senior listed recognized leaders. The chiefs mess are on board. The master petty officers on board, and we are trying to create that environment, ma'am, that allows us to be successful, that allows us to attenuate the security needs of the Nation, as you eloquently articulated.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Well, thank you, Admiral.

I think it is important that we focus on how leaders of the Academy are trained to handle reports of sexual assault and harassment and certainly, you know, when a cadet reports harassment by a member of the faculty. So I look forward to working with you and improvements in this area that is so vital to National security and to our homeland.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan for 5 minutes, Mr. Meijer.

Mr. MEIJER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Admiral, for joining us here today. I represent west Michigan. While I am not fortunate enough to touch part of our wonderful Great Lakes, obviously, we are proud of our coastguardsmen and—women, all of those who are helping to patrol our waters, not just internationally but also along our Great Lakes and our Northern Border with our good ally Canada.

I wanted to both thank you for your earlier commitment to maintaining a strong and representative force and making sure that we

are doing everything we can to stamp out anything within those ranks that may undermine the trust and faith that so many of the young men and women who join up in our uniformed forces have in their senior leadership and their right to be treated with dignity and with respect, in ways that build and maintain their unit cohesion so they can focus on the mission above all else.

But I just wanted to drill down a little bit into Coast Guard priorities around our Great Lakes. As I mentioned, they play a vital operational role for both safety and security in our maritime environment.

I am curious, just, in your view, in your current role, you know, what operational challenges is the Coast Guard currently facing within its Great Lakes region? Are there any persistent challenges to mission readiness that you are seeing?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes, Congressman, thanks for the question. I am a guardian of the Great Lakes. From 1996 to 1999, I commanded a ship out of western Michigan in Charlevoix. The Great Lakes is a great place to be a coastguardsman—the world's largest supply of freshwater, critically and strategically important to the Nation economically.

So, sir, some of the challenges we have in the Great Lakes are challenges we have in other parts of the Nation. We have aging infrastructure—you know, piers, boathouses. Not too long ago, when I visited St. Ignace in my 3-year tenure to date as the Commandant, you know, they were doing boat repair work in the salt facility that the highway used for salt repairs on the roads. That is unacceptable. We need to do better by our folks. So we are getting after those infrastructure challenges across the Coast Guard, and, again, up in the Great Lakes, there are the same things there.

So, in the Great Lakes, we have an air station in Detroit, an air station in Traverse City. We recently changed the aircraft in Traverse City from 65 Dauphin smaller, short-range helicopters to longer, medium-range, what we call Jayhawks. Very capable. We stand a summer watch down in Chicago and over in Muskegon.

So we are having a heck of a lot of challenges with our fleet of 98 MH-65 Dauphin helicopters just in terms of their readiness, parts availability. We have flown them beyond any other organization in the world in those helicopters. I need to drive 98 down to a smaller number and drive up the fleet of Jayhawks to a bigger number. It is about 48 today, and I need to increase that.

You know, standing those summer watches in those places is increasingly challenging. With the 60 in Traverse City, that 60 really has to reach to ameliorate some of the concerns of why we had those [inaudible] in the first place.

So I would welcome an opportunity with the Members of the Michigan delegation about some things that have changed: Our increasingly more capable platforms on the surface, our increasingly better reach and on-time sustainment in the air with the Jayhawks.

But stealth and helicopters are really proving problematic for us in terms of parts, reliability. We are committed to that for another decade or so. But, you know, where do I absolutely need to have them and where could we take very minimal risk and still attenu-

ate the concerns of your Great Lakes citizens, sir, I would welcome that conversation.

Mr. MEIJER. Thank you, Admiral.

While, obviously, many in Michigan are used to seeing the orange Dauphins flying over our shores and our beaches, as someone who has served in the Army, I very much appreciate the Black Hawk platform and everything that that can do in order to have an expanded range.

I am little dismayed to hear—St. Ignace has some of the best smoked whitefish in the world, but it is frustrating that their boat repair capabilities are having to be outsourced to the road maintenance folks.

I guess just real quick, and you touched upon this briefly, but just if you could put a finer point on it, you know, please, what other areas besides that conversation and the rerouting of some of our aerial assets, what can Congress do to ensure the Coast Guard has the resources it needs to carry out this mission not only on our Northern Border but also to kind-of patrol the inland seas?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes, Congressman, I think—I will refer to an earlier answer. I think, for us, it is, you know, an organization that lost 10 percent of our purchasing power on our operations and support budget over the last year, sort of, 8, 9 years post-sequestration, it is getting healthy there.

You know, the Congress has invested in its Coast Guard in the last couple budget cycles. It is maintaining that momentum so we can continue our recapitalization programs and, really, that 3–5 percent annual growth. That would allow me as a service chief and my successor to put forth the Coast Guard that can attenuate the needs of the Nation, both at home and across the globe.

Mr. MEIJER. Thank you, Admiral.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Florida, Mrs. Cammack, for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAMMACK. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Admiral Schultz, for appearing before the committee today, and thank you for your service.

I appreciate your commitment to inclusion and diversity, as you have expressed in your opening statement and in your responses to my colleagues' questions today. As someone who has personally worked military sexual trauma cases, I appreciate your comments today and look forward to seeing your continual engagement on this issue and how we can foster additional accountability and prevention in the Coast Guard ranks.

Now, it is clear that you are committed to addressing these issues head-on and resolving them in as timely a manner as possible, but I do want to shift over to another urgent issue regarding the U.S. Coast Guard's ability to counter Chinese aggression in the Pacific. So this is a two-part question, so bear with me.

So, with the recent agreement that the Coast Guard signed with Taiwan to improve communications, build cooperation, and share information on Coast Guard-related efforts, can you speak to that agreement and its importance, but also share if the Coast Guard

has any plans to conduct any other FONOPs, freedom of navigation operations, in the Taiwan Strait in the near future?

Admiral SCHULTZ. So, Congresswoman, thank you for the questions. Let me start with the second question first.

Mrs. CAMMACK. Sure.

Admiral SCHULTZ. So the Coast Guard has participated in some FONOPs in the region. One of our National security cutters—back in 2019, 2 National security cutters, the *Bertholf* and *Stratton*, deployed back-to-back, 5-month deployments each, so they covered about a 10-month period of the year. That was when the Arleigh Burke cruisers *McCain* and *Fitzgerald* were undergoing repair work, so we brought some capacity to the conversation. It allowed the Fifth Fleet Commander some flexibility of where they assigned their most ballistic-missile-capable ships. We picked up some other duties. We did sanctions work.

Any, you know, FONOPs in the region, it is when we send a ship to work with the Seventh Fleet, in that part of the world, those are decisions by the fleet commander, by the combatant commander. So, if we put a ship in the fight, it is a ready, it is a trained ship. It has been used in the past, as I mentioned for Taiwan Strait transit-type FONOPs, could be in the future. But those are decisions that reside at the COCOM and the fleet level, but I will send capable assets, upon request, to them.

To your first question, Congresswoman, here, just on the China threat, you know, it is absolutely a Coast Guard piece of that. I mentioned about being a recognized Coast Guard, I think, that has the credibility that we operate in a rules-based, modern maritime governance model. We can bring credibility through our voice. We can bring credibility through our forward-deployed presence, which, in a fairly small Coast Guard—we think about the Marines as the next-smaller service, north of 180,000 people. We are a 42,000-person Coast Guard. But I have demonstrated a willingness to take risk, to put as much Coast Guard into that fight as we can.

Those Fast Response Cutters going to Guam, those National security cutters deploying to support the Seventh Fleet Commander, we will continue to do that, working closely. I put a new Coast Guard captain on the Indo-Pacific staff, in their J5 directorate there, to work on how we optimally take finite Coast Guard capacity and put it against the top threats.

I have been in discussions with former NSC staff, current NSC staff about, you know, in that part of the world, everybody wants more Coast Guard, so how do we go to the right places with the right Coast Guard. It doesn't have to always be a shift; it can be an adaptive package. It could be training. We do a lot of mobile training.

We are putting a new attaché in Singapore. I put an attaché in Australia this past summer that services New Zealand, Australia, and Papua New Guinea. I look at the Oceania region as a critically important part of the conversation about the Indo-Pacific, and that is work that is really righteous and right for the Coast Guard to step up to.

But, again, there is a capacity piece, so I have to be careful to not get too far ahead of my skis in how much I sign up to do. But I am willing to put as much as I can into the fight, ma'am.

Mrs. CAMMACK. Well, thank you, Admiral. I appreciate that.

Now I am going to bring it home a little bit. So I have a question regarding some concerns that I have heard from constituents in Florida.

We are 3 years into the inspection of towing vessels and about to enter the final year of the new inspection regime's phase-in period. However, I am hearing from several of my constituents that the Coast Guard is now rescinding certificates of inspection and issuing new requirements on things like certified lifeboatmen and changing policy on manning vessels with automated engine rooms.

Can you provide more information as to why the Coast Guard is creating new hurdles several years into a phase-in process, rather than focusing on proactive enforcement to get us to 100 percent inspection over the next few years?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congresswoman, I need to take that back, because I am not familiar with those issues.

Mrs. CAMMACK. OK.

Admiral SCHULTZ. We are working with—you know, we brought in a large population, north of 6,500 or so uninspected towing vessels. I think there is a tremendous uptick in terms of—or upside of that, in terms of safety, safety on the water, safety for our mariners that we have a responsibility to do.

We are working with, you know, third-party oversight. There is a split, where some of that work remains Coast Guard work, some of that goes to a third party. We have really stepped up our game for third-party oversight to make sure the enforcement scheme are compliant, they are standards-based.

The issues you talk about, I am not sure. You know, my voice is always talking about the Coast Guard being a common-sense regulator. If we are making changes mid-stride, let me understand what that is, ma'am. Let me make a commitment to you to research that. We will work with your staff. We will bring back answers to you, if that is acceptable.

I have not heard those issues. We heard some issues about, you know, vessels nosing out, and we worked to find a common-sense solution with the AWO, which represents a large number of the uninspected towing vessels. I meet with them regularly.

So I want to understand the issue, ma'am, and then I want to be able to speak to it from an informed fashion, if that is acceptable to you.

Mrs. CAMMACK. That works great. Thank you so much, Admiral. Our teams will follow up.

I appreciate your time. Again, thank you for your service.

With that, I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia for 5 minutes, Mr. Clyde.

Mr. CLYDE. Admiral, thank you for being here and for your service to this Nation.

I hope the focus of the Coast Guard remains on equal opportunities and not equal outcomes. I believe it is up to individual members to determine their outcomes, and the Coast Guard should be all about merit-based evaluations with their personnel.

I have complete confidence in the Coast Guard. As a retired Navy commander who has spent many years “hazed gray and underway,” I fully understand that the Coast Guard plays a very integral role in the defense of our Nation.

The strategic environment is rapidly evolving across the globe. As our Nation transitions our focus from threats of unequal warfare, I know that the Coast Guard’s unique capabilities will serve as a critical component in countering both China and Russia.

In addition, the Coast Guard’s activities complement the efforts of Customs and Border Patrol in stopping the illicit flow of narcotics.

So, regarding China, Admiral, it is no secret that China is using their maritime industry, Coast Guard, and Navy to expand their influence in the Pacific. In addition to expanding this, they have used these entities to harass vessels that are engaged in oil exploration and other commercial activity.

Can you briefly explain how the Coast Guard is working with our allies to help deter this harassment by China?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes, sir, Congressman. Thank you for the question.

Just on the first point, you know, to ensure those equal outcomes, I need to ensure the equal opportunities, and we need to address that. I think that is on-going work, and I am committed to that. We appreciate the oversight committees’ focus and priority there.

In terms of the China, what are we doing, you know, what we bring to the region is, we have transferred former Coast Guard cutters, what we call in the Excess Defense Program, a DOD-led program, to the Vietnamese, we have transferred them to the Sri Lankans, we have transferred them to other regional Indo-Pacific partner nations. The Philippines have 3 vessels. The Philippines are building a coast guard—their Navy is less than 20,000. They are building a coast guard out of 35,000 strong.

What the regional partners recognize is, you know, the coast guard, a coast guard, is an organization that allows you to enforce domestic laws and also allows you to bring some National security into the conversation. They see the agility of our U.S. Coast Guard as really a useful sentinel for them in their regional role.

So what we are doing is, we are helping them build out their coast guards. We have an advisor in the Philippines. We have an O4 advisor with the Vietnamese. We do mobile training teams. We bring many of those regional partners here to our resident courses, and we do exchanges at sea.

When those National security cutters were over there in 2019, I visited the National security cutter Stratton in port in the Philippines to show the Commandant’s commitment to that. I met with the Philippine leaders.

My Pacific Area commander, now Vice Commandant, she traveled through the region. Some restrictions, obviously, in the recent 15, 16 months. But we will do subject-matter engagements, we will do senior leader engagements.

We will do all that, partnered with the Indo-Pacific team, because the combatant commander owns the regional responsibilities, sir, but we are absolutely about putting as much Coast Guard

across subject-matter experts, key leader engagements, mobile training, forward-deployed platforms, at-sea exchanges. I think all those things, sir, really bring the Coast Guard goodness to that conversation.

Mr. CLYDE. All right.

Is there anything that we in Congress can do to help you with that mission that we haven't done already?

Admiral SCHULTZ. So, Congressman, I talked about the budget. So, at the risk of kicking that can another time, I would just say, recognizing, you know, that the Coast Guard, which is small, which is outside of the Department of—

Mr. CLYDE. Right.

Admiral SCHULTZ [continuing]. Defense, is an armed force, you know, we had some challenges back in late 2018, 2019, where Coast Guard men and women went unpaid for 35 days. That was tough. I didn't think, as a service chief, I would be explaining to folks why they didn't earn a paycheck. We have not quite fixed that.

We fixed, with the support of the Congress, our parity for our retirees. That will go into effect in the coming years, and I am excited about that. Some retirees live paycheck to paycheck, and the fear of not getting a check is pretty palpable.

Just a continued recognition, you know, Lord willing, it doesn't happen again, if we ever have a shutdown, that the Armed Forces men and women of the Coast Guard don't somehow end up unpaid again. I would like to make sure there is a parallel consideration with our DOD brethren and sisters in the Armed Forces that reside in Department of Defense.

Mr. CLYDE. Oh, absolutely. I concur with you 100 percent on that. You will have my full support to make sure that the Coast Guard is on parity with the Department of Defense when it comes to that, that there should be no reason that the Coast Guard should suffer in any way like that. So thank you for bringing that important subject up.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Thank you, Congressman.

Mr. CLYDE. I have another question for you, regarding transnational crime. Since this administration has taken office, has the Coast Guard seen an increase in human and narcotics trafficking?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman, I think the narcotic smuggling is persistent, and have we seen an uptick or not? That is tough to say. You know, we stop somewhere in the 10 to 20 percent of those illicit narcotics smuggled by sea.

It is a vast ocean with a finite number of Coast Guard cutters involved, Coast Guard law enforcement teams, and a finite number of Navy ships, as your Navy is increasingly globally deployed and they have to make tough choices about the pacing China threat, the difficult Russian problem set, activities on the Arabian Gulf and the Middle East.

I think that is a persistent threat. I alluded to the increasing loss of life here domestically from the opioids and fentanyl and, really, cocaine. Use is up. Cocaine-related deaths are up. So that is important work, sir. But to say, is it up, is it down? I don't know.

I think what we have seen a little bit at the border—this is an apolitical statement—is, you know, years back, the cartels sort-of steered away from being involved in the human trafficking at the border because it threatened their narcotics business. It seems to me that the cartels are back. Are they the exact same cartels? I don't know. But I think cartel transnational criminal activity is alive and well. A well-funded Coast Guard gets after a large portion of that, and that will remain a priority for us, sir.

Mr. CLYDE. Well, thank you. I think you do a great job in interdiction too.

But one follow-up—

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. CLYDE. All right. I yield back.

Thank you, Admiral.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

I thank the witness for his testimony and the Members for their questions.

Some Members have indicated that they will have additional questions for you, Admiral Schultz, and we ask that you respond expeditiously in writing to those questions.

The Chair reminds Members that the committee record will remain open for 10 business days.

Without objection, the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]



## APPENDIX

QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR ADMIRAL KARL L. SCHULTZ

*Question 1a.* You indicated at the hearing that you see “a potential benefit” and are “open to change” regarding Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin’s recommendation to President Biden that the prosecution of certain crimes be removed from the military chain of command and instead be handled by independent authorities.

Please fully articulate your opinion of Secretary Austin’s recommendation.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 1b.* You seemed to indicate in your response to a question from Representative Sheila Jackson Lee that, should this change go into effect, you believe commanders should still be involved in cases of sexual assault. Is that correct?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 1c.* Given the prevalence of sexual assault allegations in the Coast Guard, as demonstrated by the data in the Sexual Assault in the U.S. Coast Guard (fiscal year 2020) report and allegations from whistleblowers, do you believe that the current system of involving an individual’s chain of command is leading to full accountability for perpetrators?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2a.* The Coast Guard’s recently-issued report, Sexual Assault in the U.S. Coast Guard (fiscal year 2020), shows that the number of reports of sexual assault have more than doubled over the last decade, from roughly 100 in fiscal year 2011 to nearly 250 in fiscal year 2020.

What are you as Commandant doing to stop the scourge of sexual assault in the Coast Guard?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2b.* Please provide the percentages of sexual assault reports that came from women of color for each of the past 5 years.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 3a.* As articulated in your testimony, the Coast Guard aims to recruit 25 percent women and 35 percent underrepresented minorities. You mentioned that the Coast Guard has fallen short of its goals on women’s recruitment, but exceeded them when it comes to minority recruitment.

Are these percentages on a per-year basis?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 3b.* How did the Coast Guard identify these targeted percentages, and how frequently are they adjusted?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 3c.* What does the data show in terms of retention of the individuals who are recruited in pursuit of these goals? What are the Coast Guard’s retention goals overall and for these populations in particular?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 4.* You stated in response to a question from Representative Emmanuel Cleaver that, “it is only when we understand what is on our people’s minds that we can be responsive to that and strive to better ourselves.” Furthermore, in your response to a question from Representative Yvette Clarke, you correctly stated that “the buck stops with [you].”

Will you then, as Commandant, commit to meeting regularly with whistleblowers and other survivors who are willing, including Commander Kimberly Young-McLear, to listen to their stories and hear their suggestions as to what is needed to create consistent, unfailing accountability for their cases and across the Coast Guard?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 5.* The Coast Guard’s Civil Rights Manual requires investigators of harassment and bullying complaints to have received Civil Rights and Civil Liberties-approved training on conducting investigations. However, this committee and the

House Committee on Oversight and Reform found in our 2019 joint investigation that no such training actually existed. Does this training now exist? Are all investigators now required to receive it? If so, please provide the number of individuals who have received this training to date.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 6.* Has the Coast Guard pursued the suggestion in the Righting the Ship Majority staff report that the service consult and collaborate with outside experts and stakeholders, including the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, on implementing the 7 recommendations made in the Righting the Ship report? If so, please provide a summary of the outcome of those consultations.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 7.* The 2019 Righting the Ship Majority staff report encouraged the Coast Guard to adopt additional measures to strengthen the Coast Guard's processes and procedures for investigating and resolving allegations of harassment and bullying beyond the report's 7 recommendations. What additional measures have been or will be implemented by the Coast Guard to that end? What is the time line of implementation for each new measure?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 8.* What is the Coast Guard's policy to determine whether someone accused of wrongdoing should be reassigned or placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of a full investigation? Does that policy differ if the subject of the investigation is an officer?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 9.* Please provide follow-up information regarding the Second Chance Program, specifically:

- The number of times the Second Chance Program has been utilized in the past 5 years; and
- The demographic breakdown of the individuals who have been approved for participation in the Second Chance Program in that 5-year time frame, and the circumstances of their participation.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 10.* Please detail the Coast Guard's efforts to identify and root out White supremacy within its ranks.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 11a.* What efforts has the Coast Guard made, in coordination with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to identify whether any active-duty, reservist, or retired service members or civilian employees participated in the insurrection at the Capitol on January 6, 2021?

Please detail the findings of those efforts to date.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 11b.* If no such efforts have been undertaken, why not?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 12a.* Last year, you announced a prohibition on displays or depictions of the Confederate flag within the Coast Guard.

How does the Coast Guard enforce the prohibition of the display or depiction of the Confederate flag, including at remote postings?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 12b.* How many breaches of this policy have occurred since the ban was implemented, and what consequences do violators face?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 12c.* What is the service doing to ensure any official or unofficial Coast Guard items and memorabilia displaying the Confederate flag from before the issuance of the ban are also eradicated?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 13a.* The RAND Corporation report Improving Gender Diversity in the U.S. Coast Guard: Identifying Barriers to Female Retention outlined many challenges facing women in the Coast Guard.

What steps has the Coast Guard taken to remedy the barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women identified in the RAND Corporation report Improving Gender Diversity in the U.S. Coast Guard: Identifying Barriers to Female Retention?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 13b.* The RAND Corporation report found that women in the Coast Guard can feel pressured to choose between the demands of working in the service and their desire to have a family. How does the Coast Guard ensure women who wish to start families can retain their careers in the service and not be excluded, explicitly or implicitly, from opportunities for advancement? How does the Coast

Guard account for the potential for service members to go on parental leave when developing staffing plans? How is parental leave addressed in performance evaluations?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 13c.* What changes to berthing on newly procured National Security Cutters, Offshore Patrol Cutters, and other vessels have been made to more inclusively accommodate mixed-gender crews?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN FOR ADMIRAL KARL L. SCHULTZ

*Question 1a.* The 2019 Righting the Ship Majority staff report found that Black cadets are subjected to substantially higher rates of discipline and pass courses at a lower rate than their peers at the Coast Guard Academy. According to the Coast Guard, Black cadets make up approximately 10 percent of those who are disenrolled from the Academy for academic or conduct issues, but only about 5 percent of those who graduate.

What is the Coast Guard doing to address this disparity?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 1b.* Will you commit to providing this committee with yearly demographic data on disciplinary and graduation rates at the Coast Guard Academy?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2.* What specific implicit bias mitigation measures does the Coast Guard utilize to make sure punitive action is fair and not disproportionality levied on service members of color across the service?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 3.* In your opinion as Commandant, what are the most urgent issues facing the LGBTQ community in the Coast Guard?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 4.* What specific initiatives has the Coast Guard undertaken to ensure members of the LGBTQ community feel welcome in the ranks, including in recruitment; housing; mental and physical health services; and protection from harassment, bullying, and assault?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 5a.* The RAND Corporation has conducted studies for the Department of Defense that include LGBTQ data, but the last two studies commissioned by the Coast Guard to examine workforce issues excluded LGBTQ perspectives and data.

What is Coast Guard leadership's rationale for this exclusion?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 5b.* Will the Coast Guard commit to commissioning a study regarding issues affecting LGBTQ service members and sharing those findings with this committee?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM HON. DAN BISHOP FOR ADMIRAL KARL L. SCHULTZ

*Question 1.* Can you provide detail about affinity groups, body composition standards changes, and prohibition of use of gendered language in evaluations?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2.* Can you provide copies of all D&I training materials in use or used in past 24 months?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTION FROM HON. CLAY HIGGINS FOR ADMIRAL KARL L. SCHULTZ

*Question.* We have heard your need for annual growth of 3 to 5 percent. Would that level of funding allow the Coast Guard to crew and operate new assets; make meaningful investments in its shore portfolio and IT systems; and recruit, train, and retain the workforce of the future?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.



## APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM K. DENISE RUCKER KREPP TO CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON

*July 5, 2021.*

Chairman BENNIE THOMPSON,  
*House Homeland Security Committee, H2-176 Ford House Office Building, Wash-  
ington, DC 20515.*

Re: Building the Coast Guard America Needs: Achieving Diversity, Equity, and Ac-  
countability Within The Service

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you for holding the June 23, 2021 hearing re-  
garding harassment, bullying, assault, and retaliation in the Coast Guard. As a  
former Coast Guard officer and Maritime Administration Chief Counsel, I testified  
twice in 2014 before a Congressionally-mandated panel and again in 2019 before the  
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights about assault and retaliation. The following are  
my recommendations on how to stop the long-known, but little addressed problems.

*Annual Report.*—The Coast Guard is required to submit an annual report on sexual  
assault. This report is usually shared with Congress in the middle of the year,  
after the service's authorization and appropriation hearings. Requiring the report to  
be submitted as part of the service's proposed budget will give Congress additional  
opportunities to ask Coast Guard leaders about the report and it will encourage  
them to provide more timely responses.

*Prosecutions.*—Very few sexual assault cases are prosecuted and this low number  
discourages survivors from seeking help. Ask the Coast Guard what it will be doing  
this year and in the next 5 years to increase the prosecutions. Their responses  
should be in writing, allowing Congress to better track the service's progress.

*Retaliation.*—Per numerous Inspector General reports, Coast Guard personnel  
have been retaliated against. I recommend that you direct the Coast Guard to pro-  
vide an annual report on retaliation and bullying. Direct them to share the total  
number of cases and how each case was resolved. Having served as a Federal agency  
chief counsel, I can share that annual reports linked to budget hearings force ac-  
tion.

*Compare data.*—Every year, Coast Guard veterans file military sexual trauma  
claims with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The VA tracks these claims  
by conflict, State, gender, and race. I recommend that you request information on  
an annual basis to better understand the financial costs associated with the crimes.

*Find the money.*—Civilian claims of retaliation, harassment, and bullying may file  
monetary claims against the Coast Guard. I recommend that you request an annual  
accounting from the service on these claims. When requesting the money informa-  
tion, Congress should ask if individuals who harassed, bullied, or retaliated against  
a Coast Guard member are still employed by the service.

*Apology.*—Please direct Admiral Schultz to write a written apology to CDR Young-  
McLear, doing so will encourage other retaliation victims to share their stories.

Thank you for holding the June hearing. Please let me know if you have any ques-  
tions regarding my recommendations.

Sincerely,

K. DENISE RUCKER KREPP,  
*Former Coast Guard officer and former Maritime Administration Chief Counsel.*

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