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Servicemembers  
United States Coast Guard

Dear Coasties:

I'm sure you have heard and seen the recent policy changes affecting the Coast Guard, and many of you have felt the whirlwind effects in very tangible ways. So far, they include diverting assets and personnel to the border, pausing enforcement of harassment policies, banning transgender servicemembers, and eliminating positions, personnel, and organizations that address diversity, equity, and inclusion. In addition, they fired your Commandant – evicting an Admiral with a 40 year career in the Coast Guard, [reportedly with three hours notice](#).

As an immigrant, a person of color, and a Marine Corps veteran, I believe that the Administration's priorities are misguided at best but truly detrimental at their worst. These rapid and reckless changes will result in a less capable and less ready Coast Guard. At a time in our history where we need to be united in service on behalf of the American people, I fear these policies are causing more division than ever before.

I've had the incredible opportunity to visit your colleagues around the country and around the world. From JIATF South to Kodiak and from Panama to Detroit, I've gotten to experience a cross-section of your life as a Coastie. What I've learned is that each and every one of you does important work under incredibly difficult circumstances.

I've also witnessed your strong commitment to our country and each other. When Admiral Fagan issued the Accountability and Transparency Review, you said "what can I be doing to help?" You all understand that an inclusive service is a strong service. That never meant lowering standards and jeopardizing operations. It means treating everyone as though they are one U.S. Coast Guard family.

My brother also served in the Marines and there's nobody I'd trust in battle more than him. Throughout my service, I gained a lot of brothers and sisters and I'm sure you've done the same. Unfortunately, the President, who has never served, is taking actions seeking to pit you against one another. He wants you to be more concerned about the gender of your shipmates than their ability to drive a cutter. He believes that permitting harassment somehow won't affect recruitment and retention.

These policies don't just affect the most vulnerable servicemembers – they affect every Coastie and will have a detrimental effect on readiness and your day-to-day life.

When I went on board the Alex Haley in Kodiak, I immediately understood the value of modern cutters. Where is the Executive Order surging funding to replace aging Coast Guard assets?

When I visited Detroit, I learned that Coasties serving aboard on icebreakers were unable to take leave because there was nobody to fill in. Where is the Executive Order increasing recruitment and retention?

When I visited JIATF South, I witnessed firsthand the limitations the Coast Guard faces due to IT deficiencies. Where is the Executive Order to bring Coast Guard IT into the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Where is the Executive Order addressing military pay and housing allowances in high cost-of-living locations?

Where is the Executive Order stopping the consistent reductions in Overseas COLA?

Where is the Executive Order fixing the Coast Guard's \$7 billion shoreside infrastructure backlog? Unfortunately, I don't think they're coming and that's unacceptable.

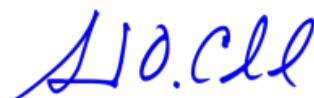
If nothing else, I want you to know first and foremost that I am sorry. Whether you feel targeted by these chaotic and dehumanizing policies, or if your service has been made instantly more difficult and uncertain, I am truly sorry. You deserve better. In what feels like our darkest hours, we often find our humanity and shared values, is what brings us back to the light – and I stand with you.

I don't know what will happen next, but I am doing everything I can to help. Individuals who choose to serve this great country deserve the highest level of respect and dignity. While that is not reflected by your current Commander in Chief, I have no doubt that you will continue to stand by your Coast Guard family in their times of need, because that is what you do – serve and save lives.

You have a constitutional right to speak with Congress, anonymously and without fear of retaliation. If you have concerns that I can be helpful with through my post as the Ranking Member of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, please feel free to reach out:

[TransportationDemsWhistleblower@mail.house.gov](mailto:TransportationDemsWhistleblower@mail.house.gov)

Sincerely,



Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress  
Ranking Member

House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation