



Lt Gen Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret)  
President and CEO

November 21, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
United States Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and  
Minority Leader McCarthy,

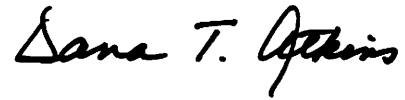
On behalf of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), the nation's leading voice for commissioned officers from the seven uniformed services, I am writing to support S. 2297, the *Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2019*. This bill contains important provisions which ensure members of the USCG are paid in the event of any lapse in appropriations or government shutdown.

During the 35-day shutdown between December 2018 and January 2019, the U.S. Coast Guard continued to work without compensation, providing the vital services which safeguarded our nation's coastline and waterways. MOAA supported S. 21, *the Pay Our Coast Guard Act*, legislation which made continuing appropriations for these servicemembers in the event that appropriations were not in effect. Section 221 of S. 2297 echoes this bill, and thoroughly supports compensation for active duty, retirees, combat related special compensation, concurrent receipt, the survivor benefit plan, payments for medical care for retirees, and other services to families during a lapse in appropriations or a shutdown.

The Coast Guard plays a critical role as the principle federal agency responsible for maritime safety, security, and environmental protections of U.S. ports and waterways. Additionally, they provide humanitarian aid to those impacted by natural or man-made disasters, contributions to the intelligence community, and law enforcement associated with a variety of fields. Lapses in compensation to these essential services stymie the ability to grow, equip, and maintain the force necessary to meet national security needs and jeopardize retention, recruitment, and the readiness of this all-volunteer Armed Force. As such, continuation of pay is fundamental to stabilize the force's contribution to national security.

MOAA appreciates your leadership and consideration of this important piece of legislation. We look forward to staying engaged with members to support passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana T. Atkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a prominent "A".

Cc: The Honorable Maria Cantwell, The Honorable Roger Wicker, The Honorable Peter DeFazio, The Honorable Tom Graves