

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

August 28, 2024

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Mail Stop 0020
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Admiral Linda Fagan
Commandant
U.S. Coast Guard
2703 Martin Luther King Junior Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20593

Secretary Mayorkas and Commandant Fagan:

We are writing to raise concerns voiced by service members that affect operational readiness of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) amidst its decision to temporarily decommission ships due to staffing shortages.¹

As you know, USCG has reported that it is about 4,800 members short and has missed its recruiting targets for the past four fiscal years.² We have also learned that the recruiting shortfall has resulted in the closure of USCG satellite boat stations in various districts, limiting the agency's ability to monitor illicit maritime activities.³ Additionally, the decommissioning of numerous USCG ships creates a significant gap in our maritime operations by increasing the burden on remaining assets, thus shortening the lifecycle of ships due to continuous usage, and creates a hardship on USCG members to relocate to new bases due to their prior ships being decommissioned.

Also contributing to lower retention and recruitment is indoctrination training. We have heard from service members concerned with trainings and events they believe to be extraneous to mission-critical tasks, specifically Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) inclusivity training programs, including the attached examples of official USCG announcements encouraging service member participation in Transgender Shipmates Inclusion Training.⁴ We are concerned with these reports and disclosures and request answers to the following questions:

1. What initiatives are in place to improve manning shortages? Please provide details on any revisions to previous strategies, new strategies moving forward, and available statistics on their effectiveness.
2. What is the plan for the recommissioning of these ships, if there is any? When can we expect them to return to service, and what steps are being taken to expedite this process?
3. How do SOGI inclusivity training and events assist in improving manning issues – both retention and recruitment – within the USCG? Please provide supporting data.

¹ <https://seapowermagazine.org/coast-guard-to-lay-up-some-cutters-boats-in-face-of-recruit-shortfall/>

² <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-23-106750.pdf>

³ [Coast Guard weathers operational cutbacks amid serious personnel shortage \(federalnewsnetwork.com\)](https://www.federalnewsnetwork.com/news/defense/2023/07/20/coast-guard-weathers-operational-cutbacks-amid-serious-personnel-shortage/)

⁴ Base Alameda Weekly Newsletter – News Alerts for the week of 15 July - 21 July 2024

4. What was the turnout for this specific event (on July 31, 2024) and the number of individuals who were notified about it? If exact figures are not available, an estimate will suffice.
5. How much of the USCG's budget has been spent on developing and carrying out SOGI inclusivity trainings and events within the last three fiscal years?
6. What is the statutory authority or USCG directive relied upon to develop and carry out USCG SOGI inclusivity trainings and events?
7. Do USCG personnel who attend SOGI inclusivity training events receive promotion points or recognition?
8. Are USCG members attending these SOGI inclusivity trainings during work hours or as elective classes after duty hours?
9. If USCG ended SOGI inclusivity training, what would be the overall cost savings and additional training hours available to the USCG for mission-critical preparation?

We understand the USCG often loses service members due to higher-paying jobs in the private sector or due to limited opportunities for promotion and long work hours. However, we are unaware of how SOGI inclusivity training and events assist in resolving recruitment and retention challenges that threaten our operational readiness and national security needs.

The best recruiting and retention tool at the USCG's disposal is sailors on ships, patrolling their areas of responsibilities and performing mission-critical training. SOGI inclusivity programs and other indoctrination programs only serve to separate and isolate our service members into groups based on categories and preferences that are irrelevant to the overall mission of national security.

We ask you to end SOGI inclusivity training programs within the USCG and focus on mission-critical operations. Please transmit answers to the questions posed in this letter to our Military Legislative Assistants, Mr. Dominick Namias, at Dominick.Namias@mail.house.gov and Mr. Derrick Miller at Derrick.Miller@mail.house.gov, by October 1, 2024.

Sincerely,



Eli Crane
Member of Congress



Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress



Base Alameda Weekly Newsletter

News Alerts for the week of 15 July – 21 July 2024

Upcoming Events:

Greetings members of Coast Guard Island,

We are excited to announce two upcoming sessions of Transgender Inclusion Training on July 31st! This training aims to build awareness of our organizational policies regarding transgender individuals and promote a supportive environment for all. No sign-ups are required, and it is open to all members.

When: *Wednesday, July 31st*

Where: *Coast Guard Island, Point Welcome*

Session 1: *1000 – 1100*

Session 2: *1300 – 1400*

Please save the date, disseminate, and make every effort to attend to learn about the policies and how to best support our transgender community. (Note: members only need to attend ONE session)

Your participation is crucial in fostering an inclusive environment within the Coast Guard. Calendar invite to follow.

Thank you for your attention, and we look forward to your attendance!

Very respectfully,

LTJG Will Martin

PAC LDAC Chair

Coast Guard Island

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What: Transgender Shipmates Inclusion Training

When: Wednesday, 31 July
Session 1: 1000-1100
Session 2: 1300-1400
(members only need to attend one session)

Where: Point Welcome

This training is for you if:

- You work with trans people and want to create an inclusive environment.
- You want to be an ally to trans people and understand the trans experience.
- You have questions about your gender identity and need to navigate policy.

Training to Create Inclusivity for Transgender Shipmates

The transgender community needs your support.
Questions? Contact CDR Hale Allegretti (PAC-092)