

# **Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2024**

## **Section-by-Section**

### *Section 1. Short Title; Table of Contents.*

This section provides that the Act may be cited as the “Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2024.” The section also includes the table of contents for the bill.

### *Section 2. Commandant Defined.*

This section defines "Commandant" as the Commandant of the Coast Guard in this Act.

## **Title I — Coast Guard**

### **Subtitle A—Authorization of Appropriations**

#### *Section 101. Authorizations of Appropriations.*

This section amends section 4902 of title 14, United States Code, to authorize appropriations of \$14.8 billion for fiscal year 2025 and \$15.5 billion for fiscal year 2026 for the United States Coast Guard (Coast Guard or Service).

#### *Section 102. Authorized Levels of Military Strength and Training.*

This section authorizes 44,500 active-duty personnel for the Coast Guard for each of fiscal years 2025 and 2026, and for recruit and special training 3,000 student years, for flight training 200 student years, for professional training 450 student years and for officer acquisition 1,300 student years.

### **Subtitle B—Acquisition**

#### *Section 111. Modification of Prohibition on Use of Lead Systems Integrators.*

This section defines the term “lead systems integrators” as such term is defined in the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006* (P.L. 109-163).

#### *Section 112. Service Life Extension Programs.*

This section provides the Coast Guard additional flexibility regarding service life extension programs for Coast Guard cutters.

#### *Section 113. Consideration of Life-Cycle Cost Estimates for Acquisition and Procurement.*

This section requires consideration of life-cycle cost estimates for acquisition and procurement of vessels and aircraft. It conforms the Service’s acquisition policy with Maritime

Administration (MARAD) acquisition policy changes passed in *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 24 NDAA)* (P.L. 118-31).

*Section 114. Great Lakes Icebreaking.*

This section directs the Coast Guard to submit a strategy to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate regarding the acquisition of the Great Lakes Icebreaker. It also requires the Coast Guard to conduct a pilot program to determine the extent to which the Coast Guard Great Lakes icebreaking cutter fleet is capable of maintaining waterways during the next five ice seasons and includes requirements for publicly posting a report and briefing Congress on icebreaking standards.

*Section 115. Regular Polar Security Cutter Updates.*

This section requires regular reports to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the progress of its Polar Security Cutter acquisition program and directs the Coast Guard to provide timely briefings and notifications to Congress when there are significant changes in the Polar Security Cutter Acquisition process.

*Section 166. Floating Drydock for United States Coast Guard Yard.*

This section prescribes acquisition requirements and design standards for the Coast Guard to acquire a floating drydock for use at the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore, Maryland.

**Subtitle C—Organization and Authorities**

*Section 131. Modification of Treatment of Minor Construction and Improvement Project Management.*

This section increases the threshold for minor construction and improvements for Coast Guard assets that can be funded with operating funds to \$2 million.

*Section 132. Preparedness Plans for Coast Guard Properties Located in Tsunami Inundation Zones.*

This section requires the Commandant, in consultation with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), to develop location specific tsunami preparedness plans for Coast Guard properties located in tsunami inundation zones.

*Section 133. Public Availability of Information.*

This section directs the Coast Guard to make information on the interdiction and quantity of drugs and people interdicted publicly available.

*Section 134. Delegation of Ports and Waterways Safety Authorities in St. Lawrence Seaway.*

This section delegates some Coast Guard authorities in the Saint Lawrence Seaway to the Great Lakes Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation and allows the Coast Guard to issue and enforce special orders, safety zones, and take actions for security. It also aligns the implementing regulations, resources, enforcement, and authorities under Chapter 700, Ports and Waterways Safety, of title 46, United States Code, between the Coast Guard and Great Lakes Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.

*Section 135. Additional Pribilof Island Transition Completion Actions.*

This section requires the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating to provide quarterly updates to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the status of Coast Guard's efforts to establish a forward operating base in St. Paul, Alaska.

*Section 136. Policy and Briefing on Availability of Naloxone to Treat Opioid, Including Fentanyl, Overdoses.*

This section requires the Commandant to update the policy of the Coast Guard regarding the use of medication to treat drug overdoses, including naloxone for fentanyl overdoses. The policy requires access to such medication at Coast Guard facilities, onboard Coast Guard assets, and during Coast Guard operations. It also requires that all Coast Guard installations maintain a supply of naloxone (or similar medication) to treat overdoses by Coast Guard members or during interactions with the public.

*Section 137. Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence River Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service.*

This section allows the Coast Guard to issue or amend regulations to address applicable arrangements with the Canadian Coast Guard regarding vessel traffic services cooperation and vessel traffic management data exchanges within the Saint Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes.

*Section 138. Policy on Methods to Reduce Incentives for Illicit Maritime Drug Trafficking.*

This section requires the Commandant, in consultation with the Administrator of the Drug and Enforcement Administration, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense to develop a policy to address, disincentivize, and interdict illicit maritime trafficking of controlled substances and precursors being transported to produce illicit synthetic drugs.

*Section 139. Procurement of Tactical Maritime Surveillance Systems.*

This section requires, subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of Homeland Security to procure a tactical maritime surveillance system and a land-based maritime domain awareness system for use by the Coast Guard and United States Customs and Border Protection, in the Coast Guard areas of operation of South Padre Island, Texas, San Diego, California, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Key West, Florida.

*Section 140. Plan for Joint and Integrated Maritime Operational and Leadership Training for United States Coast Guard and Taiwan Coast Guard Administration.*

This section requires the Commandant to complete a plan to increase joint and integrated training opportunities for the United States Coast Guard and the Taiwan Coast Guard Administration.

*Section 141. Modification of Authority for Special Purpose Facilities.*

This section amends section 907 of title 14 of United States Code to authorize the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating to expand the types of facilities that can be leased for up to 30 years.

*Section 142. Timely Reimbursement of Damage Claims for Coast Guard Property.*

This section amends section 546 of title 14, United States Code, to modify how funds acquired during reimbursement for property damaged by a private party are treated.

*Section 143. Enhanced Use Property Pilot Program.*

This section amends section 504 of title 14, United States Code to provide the Coast Guard authority to conduct a pilot program for long-term leasing of real property. The pilot program on this authority sunsets on December 31, 2030.

*Section 144. Coast Guard Property Provision.*

This section amends title 14 of United States Code to provide the Coast Guard authority to enter into cooperative agreements with states, political subdivisions of a state, Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and other Federal agencies for the purposes of mitigation and management of natural and cultural resources.

#### **Subtitle D—Personnel**

*Section 151. Direct Hire Authority For Certain Personnel.*

This section allows the Coast Guard to hire personnel in certain positions directly.

*Section 152. Temporary Exemption from Authorized End Strength for Enlisted Members on Active Duty in Coast Guard in pay grades E-8 and E-9.*

This section provides an exemption until 2027 from the 3.0 percent and 1.25 percent threshold under current law for Coast Guard active-duty members in the paygrades E-8 and E-9.

*Section 153. Additional Available Guidance and Considerations for Reserve Selection Boards.*

This section allows Coast Guard Reserve Selection Boards to consider the specialty of the officer, in a similar way to that already undertaken by active-duty boards, per section 2114 of title 14, United States Code. This ensures the Coast Guard Reserve has senior officers with proficiency in specific specialized skills.

*Section 154. Family Leave Policies for Coast Guard.*

This section amends section 2512 of title 14 United States Code to provide members of the Coast Guard reserve access to family leave programs, and amends section 2512 to ensure Coast Guard members have access to family leave when members welcome a child via long-term foster care placement.

*Section 155. Authorization for Maternity Uniform Allowance for Officers.*

This section allows for a limited supplemental cash allowance for pregnant officers to purchase maternity and properly sized uniforms.

*Section 156. Housing.*

This section amends Chapter 29 of title 14, United States Code, to allow the Commandant to acquire existing family housing units and accept funds for administrative expenses related to real property transactions, similar to sections 2824 and 2695 of title 10, United States Code. It also requires the Commandant to submit a report on the status of the implementation of a 2024 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on the Coast Guard's Housing Program.

*Section 157. Uniform Funding and Management System for Morale, Wellbeing, and Recreation Programs and Coast Guard Exchange.*

This section authorizes funds appropriated to the Coast Guard for morale, well-being, and recreation programs and the Coast Guard Exchange to be treated as non-appropriated funds and allows them to remain available until expended. This improves financial management by allowing a single accounting systems for these programs.

*Section 158. Coast Guard Embedded Behavioral Health Technician Program.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to establish a pilot program to integrate behavioral health technicians into three Coast Guard units to facilitate integrated behavioral health care for service members.

*Section 159. Expansion of Access to Counseling.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to hire, train, and deploy at least five additional behavioral health specialists to expand access to counseling services for Coast Guard members, including specialists with training in military sexual trauma.

*Section 160. Command Sponsorship for Dependents of Members of Coast Guard Assigned to Unalaska, Alaska.*

This section requires the Commandant to grant command sponsorship to Coast Guard dependents assigned to Unalaska, Alaska, upon request of the member.

*Section 161. Travel Allowance for Members of Coast Guard Assigned to Alaska.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to implement a policy to reimburse Coast Guard members assigned to a duty location in Alaska for the cost of airfare for such members to travel to their home of record through December 31, 2026, or until the assignment pay or special duty pay authority expires.

*Section 162. Consolidation of Authorities for College Student Precommissioning Initiative.*

This section consolidates authorization for the Coast Guard College Student Precommissioning Initiative and eliminates any ambiguity between competing statutory authorities regarding the Coast Guard College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative that presently exist in sections 2131 and 3710 of title 14, United States Code.

*Section 163. Tuition Assistance and Advanced Education Assistance Pilot Program.*

This section establishes a Tuition Assistance Pilot Program (Pilot Program) for active-duty members of the Coast Guard serving at sea to encourage more members to pursue afloat opportunities. The Pilot Program reduces certain service obligations from education benefits and creates tuition assistance funding levels for members who successfully complete a duty assignment at sea.

*Section 164. Modifications to career flexibility program.*

This section provides disability, death, and other benefits to a disabled Coast Guard member or the surviving dependents of a member who dies while participating in the program, and reduces the amount of obligated duty service for participating members. It also extends accessibility to behavioral health, legal, and other resources to victims of an alleged sex-related offense.

*Section 165. Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Incentive Program for Civilian Firefighters Employed by Coast Guard in Remote Locations.*

This section authorizes the Coast Guard to provide recruitment, relocation, and retention bonuses to civilian firefighters at remotely located Coast Guard fire departments.

*Section 166. Reinstatement of Training Course on Workings of Congress; Coast Guard Museum*

This section reinstates a requirement for Coast Guard Flag Officers and Senior Executive Service members to undertake a training course on the workings of Congress. This section also allows the Coast Guard to lease the National Coast Guard Museum and other properties owned by the National Coast Guard Museum Association adjacent to the Museum. It allows the Coast Guard to solicit and accept services from nonprofit entities and enter into contracts and memorandums of agreement with non-profit entities, including the Association, to acquire such services.

*Section 167. Modification of Designation of Vice Admirals.*

This section amends section 305 (a)(1) of title 14, United States Code, by removing the requirement that a fifth Vice Admiral, if appointed by the President, be a Chief of Staff and instead allows this position to be a Vice Admiral to oversee personnel management, workforce, and dependent support, training, and related matters.

*Section 168. Commandant Advisory Judge Advocate.*

This section assigns an O-6 Judge Advocate to the staff of the Commandant to perform duties relating to legal matters arising in the Coast Guard as they relate to the Commandant.

*Section 169. Special Advisor to Commandant for Tribal and Native Hawaiian Affairs.*

This section amends chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, to establish a Special Advisor to the Commandant for Tribal and Native Hawaiian affairs (“Special Advisor”).

*Section 170. Notification.*

This section requires the Commandant to provide the relevant committees of Congress an annual notification that includes the status of funding for the Coast Guard.

**Subtitle E—Coast Guard Academy**

*Section 171. Modification of Board of Visitors.*

This section updates the membership, appointment periods, and length of service, duties, meetings, staffing, and reports related to the Coast Guard Academy Board of Visitors.

*Section 172. Study on Coast Guard Academy Oversight.*

This section directs the Coast Guard to conduct a study on the governance of the Coast Guard Academy and provide recommendations to Congress within a year of enactment to improve governance at the Academy.

*Section 173. Electronic Locking Mechanisms to Ensure Coast Guard Academy Cadet Room Security.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to install electronic locking mechanisms on each room at the Coast Guard Academy, test such mechanisms for proper function, and use a system that electronically records access information. This section also requires the Superintendent to promulgate a policy and cadet training regarding cadet room security policies and procedures.

*Section 174. Coast Guard Academy Student Advisory Board and Access to Timely and Independent Wellness Support Services for Cadets and Candidates.*

This section requires the Commandant to establish a Student Advisory Board at the Coast Guard Academy, to include task forces on sexual assault and women's related matters, in order to identify challenges facing cadets relating to health and wellbeing, access to healthcare, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual violence.

*Section 175. Report on Existing Behavioral Health and Wellness Support Services Facilities at Coast Guard Academy.*

This section requires the Commandant to submit a report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on existing behavioral health and wellness support services facilities at the Coast Guard Academy as well as additional behavioral health and wellness support services that would be beneficial to cadets and officer candidates.

*Section 176. Required Posting of Information.*

This section requires written information to be posted in each dormitory at the Coast Guard Academy regarding methods of reporting crimes, including harassment, sexual assault, and sexual harassment, as well as external resources for wellness support, work-life, medical services, and support related to behavioral health, civil rights, sexual assault, and sexual harassment.

*Section 177. Installation of Behavioral Health and Wellness Rooms.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to install or construct two rooms at the Coast Guard Academy for the purpose of supporting cadet and officer candidate behavioral health and wellness.

*Section 178. Coast Guard Academy Room Reassignment.*

This section allows Coast Guard Academy cadets to request room reassignments, consistent with policy, if they experience discomfort.

*Section 179. Authorization for Use of Coast Guard Academy Facilities and Equipment by Covered Foundations.*

This section allows the Coast Guard Academy to provide facilities and equipment support and endorsement to charitable foundations that support the Academy. The section mirrors authorities provided to other military service academies.



*Section 180. Concurrent Jurisdiction at Coast Guard Academy.*

This section authorizes the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating to establish concurrent jurisdiction between the Federal Government and the State of Connecticut to investigate and prosecute crimes under Connecticut law that are committed on Coast Guard Academy property.

**Subtitle F—Reports**

*Section 181. Maritime Domain Awareness in Coast Guard Sector for Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands.*

This section directs the Coast Guard to provide a report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on issues concerning maritime domain awareness in the area of responsibility of the Coast Guard sector responsible for Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands.

*Section 182. Report on Condition of Missouri River Dayboards.*

This section requires a one-time report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the condition of Missouri River dayboards and the placement of buoys. It also prevents the Commandant from removing current aids to navigation unless there is an imminent threat to life or safety.

*Section 183. Study on Coast Guard Missions.*

This section directs the Coast Guard to enter into an agreement with a federally funded research and development center to both examine Coast Guard mission effectiveness in light of asset and manpower shortages and provide recommendations to address readiness gaps.

*Section 184. Annual Report on Progress of Certain Homeporting Projects.*

This section requires the Commandant to issue an annual report on the progress of all approved Coast Guard cutter homeporting projects in Coast Guard District 17 with respect to Fast Response Cutters, Offshore Patrol Cutters, and the commercially available polar icebreaker.

*Section 185. Report on Bay Class Icebreaking Tug Fleet Replacement.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to prepare a report on the strategy for replacement of the Coast Guard's Bay Class icebreaking tug fleet.

*Section 186. Feasibility Study on Supporting Additional Port Visits and Deployments in Support of Operation Blue Pacific.*

This section requires the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating to study the feasibility of increasing additional port visits and deployments in support of Operation Blue Pacific, or any successor operation oriented toward Oceania.

*Section 187. Study and Gap Analysis with Respect to Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi Aviation Hangar.*

This section requires the Commandant to complete a study and gap analysis with respect to the Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi Aviation Hangar and its capacity to accommodate the aircraft currently assigned as well as any aircraft anticipated to be assigned in the future.

*Section 188. Reports on Impacts of Joint Travel Regulations on Members of Coast Guard who rely on Ferry Systems.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to study and report on the impacts to members who utilize ferry travel for permanent change of station moves, official travel, or commuting.

*Section 189. Report on Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps Program.*

This section requires the Commandant to prepare a report on the Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program.

*Section 190. Reports on United States Collaboration with Shipyards of Canada and Finland.*

This section requires the Commandant to submit a report to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee that analyzes future opportunities to collaborate with shipyards in Canada and Finland on the construction of polar icebreakers, consistent with United States law. This section also requires the Comptroller General to study how the Coast Guard could use the expertise available at shipyards in Canada and Finland for polar icebreaker design and construction in the United States.

## **Title II — Shipping and Navigation**

### **Subtitle A—Merchant Mariner Credentials**

*Section 201. Merchant Mariner Credentialing.*

This section amends the requirements for certain merchant mariner credentials to consider advances in technology and training, and to align Coast Guard requirements with international requirements. It makes the reductions of lengths of certain periods of service passed in the FY 24 NDAA (P.L. 118-31) permanent. It changes the term “seamen” to “seafarer” in chapter 73 of title 46 to conform with common usage of the term and clarifies that renewals to existing merchant

mariner credentials begin the day after the expiration of the existing credential. It enables American Samoans who meet the definition of a United States National to be eligible for merchant mariner credentials.

*Section 202. Nonoperating Individual.*

This section extends through 2027 the current moratorium on enforcement of violations of the requirement that workers on certain vessels, unless specifically exempted in law, have a merchant mariner credential even if those workers are not involved in the operation of the vessel. This extension allows workers not involved in the operation of the vessel to work on such vessel without having a merchant mariner credential.

*Section 203. Merchant Mariner Licensing and Documentation System Requirements.*

This section requires the Secretary to consider how to allow, to the maximum extent practicable, the electronic submission of components of merchant mariner credential applications, and other related electronic documents.

**Subtitle B—Vessel Safety**

*Section 211. Grossly Negligent Operations of a Vessel.*

This section makes the grossly negligent operation of the vessel that results in serious bodily injury a Class E felony.

*Section 212. Administrative Procedure for Security Risks.*

This section provides technical corrections to the requirements to hold a merchant mariner credential.

*Section 213. Study of Amphibious Vessels.*

This section requires the Commandant to conduct a study to determine the applicability of current safety regulations to certain commercial amphibious vessels and provide a report to Congress within one year.

*Section 214. Performance Driven Examination Schedule.*

This section allows, with respect to the examination of foreign tank vessels, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating to adopt a performance-driven examination schedule to which such vessels are to be examined and the frequency with which such examinations occur.

*Section 215. Ports and Waterways Safety.*

This section conforms port safety provisions to port security changes made in the maritime title of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* (P.L. 115-254).

*Section 216. Study on Bering Strait Vessel Traffic Projections and Emergency Response Posture at Ports of the United States.*

This section directs a National Academies of Science study on the current volume of commercial traffic that transits through the Bering Strait and projections for traffic growth over the next decade. The report would also assess the adequacy of emergency response capabilities and infrastructure at the ports of Point Spencer, Nome, and Kotzebue, to address future navigation safety risks and geographic challenges necessary to conduct emergency maritime response operations in the Arctic environment.

*Section 217. Underwater Inspections Brief.*

This section directs the Coast Guard to provide a brief on the Service's underwater inspection, in lieu of drydock program within 30 days of enactment.

*Section 218. St. Lucie River Railroad Bridge.*

This section directs the Coast Guard to conduct an independent boat traffic study at the St. Lucie River Railroad Bridge before adopting a final deviation.

*Section 219. Authority to Establish Safety Zones for Special Activities in Exclusive Economic Zone.*

This section provides the Coast Guard with authority to establish safety zones for special activities within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). It places this authority in a new section 70008, of title 46, United States Code.

*Section 220. Improving Vessel Traffic Service Monitoring.*

This section implements recommendations from a National Transportation Safety Board report examining the anchor strike of the underwater pipeline in San Pedro Bay, California, in 2021. The provision seeks to increase the distance between an anchorage and underwater pipelines to avoid incursions and improve the vessel traffic service monitoring by adding audio and visual alarms for proximity alerts.

*Section 221. Designating Pilotage Waters for the Straits of Mackinac.*

This section requires vessels passing through the Straits of Mackinac, which connect Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, to engage a United States or Canadian registered pilot to improve the safety of transits through the Straits.

*Section 222. Receipts; International Agreements for Ice Patrol Services.*

This section authorizes funds received from other countries for the purposes of the North Atlantic Ocean Ice Patrol to remain available to the Coast Guard until expended.

*Section 223. Requirements for Certain Fishing Vessels and Fish Tender Vessels.*

This section provides the Coast Guard the authority to grant temporary waivers to towing regulations for certain fishing vessels and fish tender vessels that perform towing operations to or from aquaculture or hatchery worksites at the discretion of the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection. It also extends the suspension of load line requirements for certain covered fishing vessels until 2027.

**Subtitle C—Matters Involving Uncrewed Systems**

*Section 231. Establishment of National Advisory Committee on Autonomous Maritime Systems.*

This section establishes a National Autonomous Maritime Systems Advisory Committee within the Coast Guard.

*Section 232. Pilot Program for Governance and Oversight of Small Uncrewed Maritime Systems.*

This section establishes a two-year pilot program during which small uncrewed maritime systems owned, operated, or chartered by NOAA or performing oceanographic surveys on behalf of NOAA, shall not be subject to any vessel inspection, design, operations, navigation, credentialing, or training requirement, law or regulation that NOAA determines will harm real-time operational extreme weather oceanographic and atmospheric data collection and predictions.

*Section 233. Coast Guard Training Course.*

This section requires the Commandant to develop a training course on small uncrewed maritime systems and offer it annually to Coast Guard personnel working with or regulating small uncrewed maritime systems.

*Section 234. NOAA Membership on the Autonomous Vessel Policy Council.*

This section requires the Commandant, with the concurrence of the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations of NOAA, to establish the permanent membership of a NOAA employee to the Automated and Autonomous Vessel Policy Council of the Coast Guard.

*Section 235. Technology Pilot Program.*

This section amends section 319(b)(1) of title 14, United States Code, to increase the number of Coast Guard Small Boats involved in a pilot project to retrofit existing vessels with autonomous control and computer vision technology from two to four.

*Section 236. Uncrewed Systems Capabilities Report and Briefing.*

This section directs the Commandant to report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on its efforts to establish an unmanned systems capabilities office.

*Section 237. Definitions.*

This section defines the terms “counter-uncrewed system”, and “small uncrewed maritime systems” used in this subtitle.

**Subtitle D—Other Matters**

*Section 241. Controlled Substance Onboard Vessels.*

This section clarifies that under section 70503(a) of title 46, United States Code, it is a prohibited act to place or cause a controlled substance to be placed on a vessel to be smuggled at sea.

*Section 242. Information on Type Approval Certificates.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to provide certain ballast water-related data to states upon their request.

*Section 243. Clarification of Authorities.*

This section requires the Maritime Administration to be the Federal lead agency for the purposes of the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* with respect to *Deepwater Port Act* (DWPA) applications submitted after the date of enactment.

*Section 244. Anchorages.*

This section clarifies the intent of a provision in the *Elijah J. Cummings Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2020*, (P.L. 116-283), by prohibiting additional anchorages on a section of the Hudson River.

*Section 245. Amendments to Passenger Vessel Security and Safety Requirements.*

This section requires passenger vessels that carry at least 250 passengers to account for the voyage length and number of personnel onboard when determining what medication to prevent sexually transmitted diseases they should carry. This section also requires a system to be implemented that records the date, time, and identity of each crew member accessing a passenger stateroom onboard such vessels

*Section 246. Cyber-Incident Training.*

This section authorizes the Coast Guard to conduct no-notice exercises within Captain of the Port Zones.

*Section 247. Extension of Pilot Program to Establish a Cetacean Desk for Puget Sound Region.*

This section amends section 70103(c) of title 46, United States Code, to extend the authorization for the Puget Sound Cetacean Desk from four years to six years.

*Section 248. Suspension of Enforcement of Use of Devices Broadcasting on AIS for Purposes of Marking Fishing Gear.*

This section extends the temporary authorization to utilize automatic identification system devices to mark fishing gear until 2030.

*Section 249. Classification Societies.*

This section amends current law to allow the delegation of authority to inspect mobile offshore drilling units (MODUs) working on the United States Outer Continental Shelf to certain foreign classification societies even if the home Nation of such societies does not allow delegation of inspection authority for MODUs operating in the waters of the home Nation.

*Section 250. Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Removals.*

This section expands the existing prohibition on abandonment to non-barge vessels and requires the Coast Guard to keep a National inventory of any abandoned non-barge vessels.

[This section prevents the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating from enforcing citizenship or credentialing requirements for two years for near shore cable laying vertical trenching injector operators or support personnel operating specialized equipment. During those two years, the Commandant shall ensure near shore cable laying vertical trenching injector operators develop processes and requirements for certification and training and certify and train a sufficient cadre of qualified individuals to perform these jobs.]

### **Title III — Oil Pollution Incident Liability**

*Section 301. Salvage and Marine Firefighting Response Capability.*

This section provides the Coast Guard authority to verify certain existing requirements of vessel response plans. The section also requires a GAO report on the state of maritime firefighting authorities, jurisdiction and plan review, including factors that impact Federal and non-Federal cooperation.

*Section 302. Use of Marine Casualty Investigations.*

This section clarifies that the Coast Guard can use Marine Casualty Investigation Reports when adjudicating claims under the *Oil Pollution Act of 1990* (33 U.S.C. 2713).

*Section 303. Timing of Review.*

This section clarifies the timing of legal challenges against a Federal On-Scene Coordinator's response decisions during an oil spill emergency.

*Section 304. Online Incident Reporting System.*

This section requires the National Response Center to develop and maintain a web-based application to receive notifications of oil discharges or releases of hazardous substances.

*Section 305. Investment of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Court Recovery in High Yield Investments and Marine Research.*

This section removes a barrier between funds awarded as a result of a \$900 million civil settlement resulting from the 1989 oil spill and allows the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to allocate the funds in a manner that prioritizes habitat protection and habitat restoration programs.

#### **Title IV – Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Response**

*Section 401. Independent Review of Coast Guard Reforms.*

This section directs the GAO to report to Congress on the Coast Guard's implementation efforts of the "Commandant's Directed Actions—Accountability and Transparency" report dated November 27, 2023, the effectiveness of those efforts, and any additional measures the Coast Guard should implement.

*Section 402. Comprehensive Policy and Procedures on Retention and Access to Evidence and Records Relating to Sexual Misconduct and Other Misconduct.*

This section amends chapter 9 of title 14, United States Code, to require the Coast Guard to issue policy on the retention of and access to evidence and records relating to covered misconduct. It also establishes requirements regarding victim access to records after final disposition actions, requires retention of documents relating to charging determinations for certain crimes, and directs the Coast Guard to brief Congress if timelines for expedited processing of victim requests are not met.

*Section 403. Consideration of Request for Transfer of a Cadet at the Coast Guard Academy Who is the Victim of a Sexual Assault or Related Offense.*

This section requires the Commandant to provide for timely consideration and action on a request submitted by a Coast Guard Academy cadet who is the victim of an alleged sexual assault or other offense covered by Article 120, 120c, or 130 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice to either transfer to another military service academy or to enroll in a Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program affiliated with another institution of higher education.

*Section 404. Designation of Officers with Particular Expertise in Military Justice or Health Care.*



This section provides authority to the Coast Guard to designate a limited number of Officers of the Coast Guard as having particular expertise in military justice and health care professions and allow these officers to compete for promotion within their own specialty rather than against officers on the Active-Duty Promotion List.

*Section 405. Safe-to-Report Policy for Coast Guard.*

This section provides safe-to-report language regarding reports of sexual assault at the Coast Guard Academy. It mirrors similar protections available to cadets at other military service academies.

*Section 406. Modification of Reporting Requirements on Covered Misconduct in Coast Guard.*

This section expands the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Academy's sexual assault and sexual harassment reporting requirements to include: covered misconduct; retaliation for reporting; case dispositions; disciplinary action taken against perpetrators; investigations conducted for each case; and collateral misconduct. It also requires separate reporting for incidents involving recruits and officer candidates, and for the Coast Guard to provide a report to Congress on the implementation status of directed actions from the "Commandant's Directed Actions—Accountability and Transparency" report dated November 27, 2023.

*Section 407. Modifications to the Officer Involuntary Separation.*

This section replaces the need for a Board of Determination to review an officer's record and determine if that officer must show cause for an involuntary separation to occur with a requirement for the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating to promulgate regulations to govern the show cause process, bringing the Coast Guard process into line with other military services. Board of Inquiry cases will be sent directly to the Secretary for final decision.

*Section 408. Review of Discharge Characterization.*

This section amends section 2158 of title 14, United States Code, to allow a board of review to downgrade an honorable discharge to a general discharge upon finding that a former member who, while serving on active duty as a member of the Coast Guard, committed sexual assault or sexual harassment.

*Section 409. Convicted Sex Offender as Grounds for Denial.*

This section amends chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, to allow the denial of a license, certificate of registry, or merchant mariner's document to an individual who has been convicted of rape, sexual assault, or rape or sexual assault of a child under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

*Section 410. Definition of Covered Misconduct.*

This section adds a definition of covered misconduct to title 14, United States Code that includes Uniform Code of Military Justice definitions of rape; sexual assault; sexual harassment; abusive sexual contact; aggravated sexual contact; wrongful broadcast, dissemination, or creation of content; child pornography; rape and sexual assault of a child; and domestic violence.

*Section 411. Notifications of Changes to Uniform Code of Military Justice or Manual for Courts Martial Relating to Covered Misconduct.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to report to Congress when there are additions, deletions, or modifications to covered misconduct offenses or other sex-related offenses in the Uniform Code of Military Justice or the Manual for Courts Martial.

*Section 412. Complaints of Retaliation by Victims of Sexual Assault or Sexual Harassment and Related Persons.*

This section amends section 1562a of title 10, United States Code, to include the Coast Guard in existing Department of Defense requirements to document and track retaliation allegations made by victims of sexual assault or sexual harassment.

*Section 413. Development of Policies on Military Protective Orders.*

This section requires the Commandant to update policies regarding military protective order processes for victims of domestic abuse or sex-related offenses, consistent with Department of Defense law and policy. The updated policy also requires a written explanation for denial, a recusal process, and a notification to victims of the process for requesting a military protective order.

*Section 414. Coast Guard Implementation of Independent Review Commission Recommendations on Addressing Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to review and develop a plan to implement the Independent Review Commission's recommendations to address sexual misconduct. The section also requires the Commandant to brief the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate periodically on its implementation progress.

*Section 415. Policy Relating to Care and Support of Victims of Covered Misconduct.*

This section directs the Coast Guard to issue a policy to allow a victim of covered misconduct to report such misconduct to an appropriate individual within the Coast Guard and receive care and support without unreasonable delay. This section also requires the Coast Guard to revise its definition of "intimate partner" to be consistent with the meaning given the term in section 930 of title 10, United States Code.

*Section 416. Establishment of Special Victim Capabilities to Respond to Allegations of Certain Special Victim Offenses.*

This section amends section 573 of the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013* (10 U.S.C. 1561 note) to include the Coast Guard in existing Department of Defense requirements to establish special victims capabilities for investigating and prosecuting allegations of child abuse, serious domestic violence, or sexual offenses. This section also directs the Coast Guard to brief Congress on the implementation plan, initial capabilities, and evaluation of effectiveness of these special victims capabilities.

*Section 417. Members Asserting Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Sexual Assault, or Traumatic Brain Injury.*

This section amends section 2516 of title 14, United States Code, to expand eligibility for a Coast Guard member alleging the signs and symptoms of a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder described within the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders to request a medical examination prior to involuntary separation. It expands the timeframe for members who were victims of sexual assault to request a medical examination from two years to five years and requires the Coast Guard to notify members of their right to request such an examination when they are given a notice of involuntary separation.

*Section 418. Participation in CATCH a Serial Offender Program.*

This section requires the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating to ensure the Coast Guard's participation in the Department of Defense Catch a Serial Offender ("CATCH") program, and to enter into a memorandum of agreement with the Secretary of Defense to facilitate Coast Guard access to and participation in the CATCH program.

*Section 419. Accountability and Transparency Relating to Allegations of Misconduct Against Senior Leaders.*

This section amends chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, to require any credible allegation of misconduct made against a current or former Coast Guard flag officer or Senior Executive Service member to be reported to the Inspector General of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating, who shall have the first right to investigate such allegation. The policy established by the Coast Guard should be incorporated in training and publicly distributed.

*Section 420. Confidential Reporting of Sexual Harassment.*

This section amends section 1561b of title 10, United States Code, to extend Department of Defense requirements to the Coast Guard to establish a process for a member of the Coast Guard to confidentially allege a complaint of sexual harassment. Additionally, the Coast Guard must report the data to Congress on such complaints.

*Section 421. Report on Policy on Whistleblower Protections.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to provide Congress with a report assessing current whistleblower policy and command responsibilities for whistleblowers, which shall include recommendations to strengthen whistleblower protections.

*Section 422. Review and Modification of Coast Guard Academy Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence.*

This section requires the Coast Guard to review and modify Coast Guard Academy policy related to sexual assault and sexual violence, to establish a primary prevention specialist at the Coast Guard Academy, and to establish a policy for a request for a leave of absence for a cadet who made a report of sexual harassment consistent with the other military service academies.

*Section 423. Coast Guard and Coast Guard Academy Access to Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database.*

This section requires the Commandant to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Secretary of Defense to enable the Coast Guard's criminal offender case management and analytics database to have system interface access with the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database, and to submit a plan to Congress to carry out the terms of the memorandum of understanding.

*Section 424. Director of Coast Guard Investigative Service.*

This section requires the Director of the Coast Guard Investigative Service to report directly to the Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard.

*Section 425. Modifications and Revisions Relating to Reopening Retired Grade Determinations.*

This section amends section 2501(d)(2) of title 14, United States Code, to allow a competent authority to reopen the retired grade of a commissioned officer if substantial evidence comes to light that an officer, during the commissioned service of that officer, failed to carry out applicable laws with an intent to deceive or defraud, committed rape or sexual assault, or failed to report instances of sexual assault in accordance with existing law at the time of alleged incident.

*Section 426. Inclusion and Command Review of Information on Covered Misconduct in Personnel Service Records.*

This section amends chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, to require that if a military member is convicted at court martial, receives non-judicial punishment, or punitive administrative action for covered misconduct, that this substantiated covered misconduct is placed in the personnel records of military members. It also requires commanders or supervisors to review this information when members are transferred or permanently assigned, and during hiring for civilians who are former military members.

*Section 427. Flag Officer Review of, and Concurrence in, Separation of Members Who Have Reported Sexual Misconduct.*

This section allows a Coast Guard member who has reported covered misconduct, to request an additional, higher-level review of a proposed involuntary separation. It also establishes a recusal process, and requires all members to be informed of their right to request such reviews when given an involuntary separation proposal.

*Section 428. Expedited Transfer in Cases of Sexual Misconduct or Domestic Violence.*

This section requires the Commandant to update the process for victims of sexual assault or domestic violence to request an expedited transfer to a new unit. Additionally, the section requires recusals and notifications to victims of the expedited transfer option, and a report to Congress on updated policies and information regarding transfers and denials of transfer requests.

*Section 429. Access to Temporary Separation Program for Victims of Alleged Sex-Related Offenses.*

This section requires the Commandant to update Coast Guard policy to allow members who are victims of sex-related offenses to request a temporary separation even if they have already had a previous temporary separation. The temporary separation may be requested at any point within five years of when the restricted or unrestricted report of a sex-related offense is made, and even if the enlistment period of the member is not nearing expiration.

*Section 430. Policy and Program to expand Prevention of Sexual Misconduct.*

This provision requires the Commandant to issue policies that contain elements described in section 1561 of title 10, United States Code, to expand sexual misconduct prevention programs to include increased education and training, promote healthy relationships, foster social courage to promote intervention, address behaviors on the continuum of harm that often result in sexual misconduct, and address alcohol abuse and binge drinking.

*Section 431. Continuous Vetting of Security Clearances.*

This section amends section 1564(c) of title 10, United States Code, to include the Coast Guard and require reinvestigation or readjudication of security clearances for individuals of convicted of sexual assault or sexual harassment, fraud against the United States, or any other violation the Secretary determines that renders the individual susceptible to blackmail.

*Section 432. Training and Education Programs for Covered Misconduct Prevention and Response.*

This section requires modifications to covered misconduct training curriculums for first responders, commanders, and all other Coast Guard members, to address the workforce training recommendations from the Commandant's Directed Actions—"Accountability and Transparency" report dated November 27, 2023, and ensure members are fully aware of victim support programs, Department of Veterans Affairs resources, and the Coast Guard Office of the Chief Prosecutor.

## **Title V—Comptroller General Reports**

### *Section 501. Comptroller General Report on Coast Guard Research, Development, and Innovation Program.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct an assessment of and report on the state of research, development, and innovation programs within the Coast Guard.

### *Section 502. Comptroller General Study on Vessel Traffic Service Center Employment, Compensation, and Retention.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct a study and complete a report on employment compensation, competitiveness, assignment, and retention of civilian and military personnel assigned to or otherwise employed at vessel traffic service centers in the United States.

### *Section 503. Comptroller General Report Review of Quality and Availability of Coast Guard Behavioral Health Care and Resources for Personnel Wellness.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct a review and report on the quality and availability of behavioral health care and related resources for Coast Guard personnel at Training Center Cape May, the Coast Guard Academy, and other training locations.

### *Section 504. Comptroller General Study on Coast Guard Efforts to Reduce Prevalence of Missing or Incomplete Medical Records and Sharing of Medical Data with Department of Veterans Affairs and Other Entities.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct a study and complete a report assessing the efforts of the Commandant to reduce the prevalence of missing or incomplete medical records, to share medical data of Coast Guard members with the Department of Veterans Affairs, and to ensure that electronic health records are easily accessible. The required study would also examine the ability of relevant personnel to access and search electronic health records.

### *Section 505. Comptroller General Study on Coast Guard Training and Facility Infrastructure.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct a study and complete a report on specified Coast Guard training facility infrastructure, including capital needs, equipment upgrade backlogs, necessary improvements to essential training equipment, security deficiencies, and hazards, and the resources necessary to fully address the infrastructure issues described in the study.

### *Section 506. Comptroller General Study on Facility and Infrastructure Needs of Coast Guard Stations Conducting Border Security Operations.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct a study on facility and infrastructure needs, equipment upgrade backlogs, physical security deficiencies, and hazards at

numerous Coast Guard units and small boat stations that conduct border security operations, including locations in Texas, Washington, Wisconsin, Alaska, Florida, California, and Maine.

*Section 507. Comptroller General Study on Coast Guard Basic Allowance for Housing.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct a study and report on Coast Guard involvement in, and efforts to support, the determination of the cost and housing and the calculation of the basic allowance for housing under section 403 of title 37, United States Code, including identification of Coast Guard duty locations in which there is a misalignment between the basic allowance for housing rate and the prevailing housing cost for members of the Coast Guard.

*Section 508. Comptroller General Report on Safety and Security Infrastructure at Coast Guard Academy.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to study and report on the safety and infrastructure at the Coast Guard Academy.

*Section 509. Comptroller General Study on Athletic Coaching at Coast Guard Academy.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct a study and report on the quantity of billets at the Coast Guard Academy for coaching necessary to support recruitment, intercollegiate athletics, health and physical education, and leadership development programs. The section also requires the Comptroller General to compare the quantity of full and part-time employees performing coaching functions at the Coast Guard Academy with those at other federal military service academies. Finally, the section requires the Comptroller General to identify any adverse impacts or deficiencies in cadet training and officer development that could result from having an inadequate number of billets for teaching and coaching at the Coast Guard Academy.

*Section 510. Comptroller General Study and Report on Permanent Change of Station Process.*

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct a study and report on the efficacy of the permanent change of station process and military rotations of the Coast Guard. This report will describe current policies and costs, an evaluation of the effectiveness of using contracted movers for changing stations, and assessments of how the Coast Guard is meeting rotational goals. The report will also generate recommendations for improving the permanent change of station process for Coast Guard.

## **Title VI — Amendments**

*Section 601. Amendments.*

This section contains technical and conforming amendments related to authorities in title 46, United States Code.

## **Title VII — National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

## **Subtitle A—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps**

*Section 701. Title and Qualification of Head of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps and Office of Marine and Aviation Operations; Promotions of Flag Officers.*

This section amends section 228(c) of the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2022* (33 U.S.C. 3028(c)) and requires all NOAA flag officer appointments for a Rear Admiral Upper Half or above to be subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, providing parity to such flag officers from other services. The section would also allow for a larger pool of officers to be considered from within the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps for selection as a Flag Officer.

*Section 702. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Vessel Fleet.*

This section amends the *NOAA Fleet Modernization Act* (33 U.S.C. 891a) to require NOAA to update a fleet replacement and modernization plan, including small and uncrewed vessels, and requires vessel procurement approval from NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations for vessels over 65 feet. This section also authorizes appropriations for NOAA fisheries survey vessels.

*Section 703. Cooperative Aviation Centers.*

This section amends section 218 of the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002* (33 U.S.C. 3008) to provide NOAA the authority to designate Cooperative Aviation Centers to recruit new pilots directly from civilian aviation training facilities.

*Section 704. Eligibility of Former Officers to Compete for Certain Positions.*

This section amends the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002* (33 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) to allow commissioned NOAA Corps officers who separate from NOAA under honorable conditions to compete for civilian government positions, the same as any other federal employee, for a period of five years. This section also adds reporting requirements on the use of the authority during that time.

*Section 705. Alignment of Physical Disqualification Standard for Obligated Service Agreements with Standard for Veterans' Benefits.*

The section amends section 216(c)(2)(B) of the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002* (33 U.S.C. 3006(c)(2)(B)) to clarify and align the physical disqualification standards for NOAA Corps officers and allows NOAA to waive service obligations for officers who become physically disabled due to no fault of their own.



*Section 706. Streamlining Separation and Retirement Process.*

This section amends section 241(c) of the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002* (33 U.S.C. 3041(c)) to reduce the time a NOAA Corps officer is retained on active duty following a decision by the Secretary of Commerce to separate such an officer from 180 days to 60 days.

*Section 707. Separation of Ensigns Found Not Fully Qualified.*

This section amends section 241(c) of the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002* (33 U.S.C. 3023(b)) to remove the administrative burden of retaining a NOAA Corps officer for six months after the Secretary of Commerce approves the separation of the recently appointed NOAA Corps officers who have been in the Service for less than one year.

*Section 708. Repeal of Limitation on Educational Assistance.*

This section repeals section 223(b) of the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002* (33 U.S.C. 3079-1).

*Section 709. Disposal of Survey and Research Vessels and Equipment of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.*

This section amends section 548 of title 40, United States Code, and allows NOAA to dispose of surplus vessels more efficiently, to reduce unnecessary costs and delays.

**Subtitle B—South Pacific Tuna Treaty Matters**

*Section 721. References to South Pacific Tuna Act of 1988.*

This section notes that except when otherwise expressly provided, references to amendment or repeal shall be considered made to a section or provision of the *South Pacific Tuna Act of 1988* (16 U.S.C. 973 et seq.).

*Section 722. Definitions.*

This section defines key terms in amending the *South Pacific Tuna Act of 1988* (16 U.S.C. 973 et seq.).

*Section 723. Prohibited Acts.*

This section prohibits violation of any regional terms, conditions, or limits on fishing efforts or catch. This section would streamline the prohibition on operating vessels in a Licensing Area and update the terms of agreement the United States and Pacific Island Parties.

*Section 724. Exceptions.*

This section repeals the exceptions to prohibitions for certain types of tuna fishing methods and prevent agreements of exceptions for prohibitions.

*Section 725. Criminal Offenses.*

This section reorganizes the paragraphs of prohibited acts that are defined as criminal offenses.

*Section 726. Civil Penalties.*

This section clarifies that those found to have committed a prohibited act shall be held liable to the United States. It would also clarify that all penalties shall not exceed \$250,000.

*Section 727. Licenses.*

This section amends the process by which the Secretary of Commerce and the Administrator of a Pacific Island Party process license applications. This section also allows the Secretary of Commerce to establish procedures to pay fees for licenses and eliminates the requirement that the Secretary of Commerce receive a minimum amount of license fees before forwarding applications to the Secretary of State and the Administrator of a Pacific Island Party. Finally, it also gives the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of State the authority to deny forwarding a license application and clarifies the grandfathering of certain vessels before November 3, 1995.

*Section 728. Enforcement.*

This section clarifies that enforcement applies to the entire Treaty and makes grammatical corrections to the section governing searches and seizures.

*Section 729. Findings by Secretary of Commerce.*

This section clarifies the defined areas in accordance with the Treaty amendments that the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of State may order a vessel to leave.

*Section 730. Disclosure of Information.*

This section requires certain information to be kept confidential by the Secretary of Commerce but allows for confidential information to be disclosed in certain circumstances. The section further incorporates a savings clause affirming that the authority of Congress to obtain any record or information is unaffected by this provision.

*Section 731. Closed Area Stowage Requirements.*

This section provides the Secretary of Commerce more authority to develop requirements for vessel storage when in a closed area.

*Section 732. Observers.*

This section strikes the provision of the Treaty that requires observers' access to vessels to ensure compliance with the Treaty.

*Section 733. Fisheries-Related Assistance.*

This section updates what is classified as technical assistance under the Treaty to include training, capacity building, and leveraging the private sector. It also eliminates the requirements that the United States tuna industry provide \$250,000 for technical assistance annually.

*Section 734. Arbitration.*

This section clarifies the process of determining the location of an arbitration process under the Treaty.

*Section 735. Disposition of Fees, Penalties, Forfeitures, and Other Moneys.*

This section ensures that fines or penalties are paid to the extent required by the entire Treaty.

*Section 736. Additional Agreements.*

This section grants the Secretary of State the authority to establish procedures to pursue additional agreements in addition to the Treaty.

**Subtitle C—Other Matters**

*Section 741. North Pacific Research Board Enhancement.*

This section adds a new seat on the North Pacific Research Board representing Alaskan natives, and also temporarily waives the 15 percent administrative cost cap for five years to alleviate current budget constraints within the Board, and allows for flexibility in this cost cap if the interest rate falls under a certain percent in the future.