

**Senate Commerce Committee Coast Guard Nominee Questionnaire
118th Congress**

Instructions for the nominees: The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation (the “Committee”) asks you to provide typed answers to each of the following questions. It is requested that the nominee type the question in full before each response. Do not leave any questions blank. Type “None” or “Not Applicable” if a question does not apply to the nominee. Begin each section (i.e., “A”, “B”, etc.) on a new sheet of paper. Electronically submit your completed questionnaire to the Committee in PDF format and ensure that sections A through E of the completed questionnaire are in a text searchable and that any hyperlinks can be clicked. Section F may be scanned for electronic submission and need not be searchable.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

1. Name (Include any former names or nicknames used):

Joanna Kim Hügel
Joanna Kim Beste (Maiden Name)

2. Position to which nominated:

Rear Admiral (lower half)

3. Date of Nomination:

18 September 2023

4. Address (List current place of residence and office addresses):

Home:

[REDACTED]

Work:

USCG District Seven: 909 Brickell Plaza, Miami, FL 33131

5. Date and Place of Birth:

28 May 1973 – Ogden, UT

6. Provide the name, position, and place of employment for your spouse (if married) and the names and ages of your children (including stepchildren and children by a previous marriage).

Spouse:

**Mark Eugene Hiigel
CAPT/O6 U.S. Coast Guard
USCG District Seven: 909 Brickell Plaza, Miami, FL 33131**

Children:

**Tana Lynn Hiigel; Age: 23
(U.S. Coast Guard Academy Cadet, not a dependent)**

**Ellie Kristine Hiigel; Age: 21
(U.S. Coast Guard Academy Cadet, not a dependent)**



7. List all college and graduate schools attended, whether or not you were granted a degree by the institution. Provide the name of the institution, the dates attended, the degree received, and the date of the degree.

**United States Coast Guard Academy, 1991-1995:
Bachelor of Science in Business Management**

**American Military University (AMU), 2013-2015:
Masters in Emergency and Disaster Management**

**Naval War College, 2019-2020:
Joint Professional Military Education Phase 1 (JPME1)**

8. List all post-undergraduate employment, including the job title, name of employer, and inclusive dates of employment, and highlight all management-

level jobs held and any non-managerial jobs that relate to the position for which you are nominated.

I have served as a Coast Guard officer since May 1995. Please see my official Coast Guard biography for detailed information.

9. Attach a copy of your resume.

My official Coast Guard biography is attached.

10. List any advisory, consultative, honorary, or other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed above after 18 years of age.

None

11. List all positions held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other business, enterprise, educational, or other institution.

None

12. Please list each membership you have had after 18 years of age or currently hold with any civic, social, charitable, educational, political, professional, fraternal, benevolent or religiously affiliated organization, private club, or other membership organization. (For this question, you do not have to list your religious affiliation or membership in a religious house of worship or institution). Include dates of membership and any positions you have held with any organization. Please note whether any such club or organization restricts membership on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

- **Coast Guard Academy Alumni Association, 1995-2000**
- **Collier Elementary School Mobile, AL PTA Member, 2005-2009**
- **Aviation Training Center Mobile, AL Coast Guard Spouse Club Member, 2006-2009**
- **Summerlake HOA Secretary (non-paid), 2008-2009**
- **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Member, Coos Bay County, OR, 2015-2016**

None of these organizations restricts membership on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

13. Have you ever been a candidate for and/or held a public office (elected, non-elected, or appointed)? If so, indicate whether any campaign has any outstanding debt, the amount, and whether you are personally liable for that debt.

None

14. List all memberships and offices held with and services rendered to, whether compensated or not, any political party or election committee within the past ten years. If you have held a paid position or served in a formal or official advisory position (whether compensated or not) in a political campaign within the past ten years, identify the particulars of the campaign, including the candidate, year of the campaign, and your title and responsibilities.

None

15. Itemize all political contributions to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity of \$200 or more for the past ten years.

None

16. List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, military medals, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievements.

- **Defense Superior Service Medal**
- **Defense Meritorious Service Medal**
- **Coast Guard Meritorious Service Medal**
- **Coast Guard Commendation Medal**
- **Coast Guard Achievement Medal**
- **Coast Guard Pistol Expert Medal**
- **Department of Homeland Security Secretary's Meritorious Service Silver Medal**
- **United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Management Directorate Award- Interagency Coordination & Leadership**

17. List each book, article, column, letter to the editor, Internet blog posting, or other publication you have authored, individually or with others. Include a link to each publication when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the publication when available.

COCOM Coast Guard Reserve Units: A Strategic Interface to Combatant Commands by CAPT Joanna Hiigel and CAPT Andy Grenier, USCGR (Ret) The Reservist Magazine Issue 1 2020 Pg. 14

<https://www.reserve.uscg.mil/Portals/2/Reservist/cover/Magazine%20Issue1%20-%202020.pdf?ver=YPnr9jrg39nYL9uF39f7eg%3d%3d>

Running in the Snow, included in More Inspirational Stories for Young Women, compiled by Alison Palmer (Page 101 Digital copy provided)

18. List all speeches, panel discussions, and presentations (e.g., PowerPoint) that you have given on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated. Include a link to each publication when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the speech or presentation when available.

2019 National Defense Transportation Association Conference Panel Member, Discussing ‘Building Partnerships within the Reserve Component’ (Presentation Not Available)

2020 Reserve Officer Association Annual Conference Panel Member: Topic Reserve Component at US Transportation Command (Presentation not available)

19. List all public statements you have made during the past ten years, including statements in news articles and radio and television appearances, which are on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated, including dates. Include a link to each statement when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the statement when available.

This Week at DHS August 18, 2023- DHS Secretary’s Award: Spotlight on USCG’s Captain Joanna Hiigel

[DHS Secretary’s Awards Spotlight on USCG’s Captain Joanna Hiigel](#)

Reservist Magazine 2017 Issue 4 Shipmates in Focus Article: Two Ships Passing in the Night by PA2 Emaia Rise Pg. 38-39

[Volume64_Issue4.pdf \(uscg.mil\)](#)

News Article Quote: Coast Guard transfers 14 migrants, one deceased person to Bahamas- 28 June 2023

[Coast Guard transfers 14 migrants, one deceased person to Bahamas > United States Coast Guard News > Press Releases \(uscg.mil\)](#)

News Article Quote: Coast Guard alters training for incoming class due to COVID-19- 06 July 2020

[Coast Guard Academy alters training for incoming class due to COVID-19 \(militarytimes.com\)](#)

20. List all digital platforms (including social media and other digital content sites) on which you currently or have formerly operated an account, regardless of whether or not the account was held in your name or an alias. Include the full name of an “alias” or “handle,” including the complete URL and username with hyperlinks, you have used on each of the named platforms. Indicate whether the account is active, deleted, or dormant. Include a link to each account if possible.

LinkedIn Joanna Hiigel – Active

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/joanna-hiigel-15>

Instagram surfnjo- Active

<https://www.instagram.com/surfnjo>

Facebook Joanna Hiigel (Joanna Beste Hiigel, JoBeeh) – Active

<https://www.facebook.com/jobeehi>

21. Please identify each instance in which you have testified orally or in writing before Congress in a governmental or non-governmental capacity and specify the date and subject matter of each testimony.

None

22. Given the current mission, major programs, and major operational objectives of the Coast Guard, what in your background or employment experience do you believe affirmatively qualifies you for appointment to the position for which you have been nominated, and why do you wish to serve in that position?

If confirmed, it will be an honor to continue to serve our great nation in the United States Coast Guard. I have a breadth of experience in Coast Guard operations, with expertise in nine of the eleven statutory missions and eight of the nine districts. My diverse background on both the active duty and reserve force provides an additional unique perspective on the broad needs of our service's workforce. I have led personnel at all levels of command, from small operational units, Area Commands, and joint Combatant Commands to interagency emergency response contingencies. Additionally, I have taught and liaised with international and interagency partners around the globe on a wide variety of assignments. Throughout all these opportunities, it has been confirmed to me over and over that it is our dedicated responders that carry out the critical duties of the Coast Guard. As such, I am committed to ensuring they have the tools necessary to complete assigned missions in support of national and global strategic engagements.

23. What do you believe are your responsibilities, if confirmed, to ensure that the Coast Guard has proper management and accounting controls, and what experience do you have in managing a large organization?

It is every Coast Guard Servicemembers responsibility to uphold the Coast Guard core values of honor, respect, and devotion to duty. If confirmed, it is my duty to ensure proper fiscal management and accounting of Coast Guard funds placed within my charge. In accordance with applicable laws and regulations, I will be an honest and fiscally prudent steward with resources and funds under my management. I am currently serving as Deputy Incident Commander for Operation Vigilant Sentry. This is an ongoing mission in response to mass maritime migration in the Caribbean. In my position, I am

trusted with ensuring fiscal responsibility on all resource procurement and surge response personnel in order to maintain proper distribution of the multi-million dollar budget.

24. What do you believe to be the top three challenges facing the Coast Guard, and why?

Recruiting- Along with all the Military Services, the Coast Guard is facing extreme recruiting challenges. The Coast Guard must find a way to increase eligibility and streamline the accession process to ensure qualified Americans that have a desire to serve, can easily embark on an exciting maritime career in the Coast Guard. As Active-Duty Coast Guard personnel move towards the end of enlistment, if their decision is to leave active-duty service, the Coast Guard reserve must remain an attractive option for continued part-time service to the nation. As a parent of two Coast Guard Academy cadets, I am personally invested in the future success of the service and have volunteered as a Coast Guard Academy Admissions Partner for over 5 years. As such I have had the privilege of helping over a dozen people successfully apply for both the Academy Introductory Mission (AIM) program and a cadet appointment at the Coast Guard Academy in Connecticut.

Retention & Training- To retain new recruits, the Coast Guard must ensure timely, modernized training for our personnel to operate in the constantly evolving technological global domain. With the roll out of a modernized cutter and aviation fleet as well as updated procurement and administrative systems, our personnel must receive training to ensure competence and confidence in their roles and equipment. Delayed or lack of training breeds frustration and a downward spiral of inefficiency and lack of expertise, which reduces an individual's ability to accomplish the mission. The Coast Guard must provide a deliberate path forward for individuals to obtain job related required competencies. This is a critical factor for our personnel to achieve job satisfaction and remain serving in the Coast Guard.

Increased Demand- Over the last few years, there has been a steady increased demand for the US Coast Guard both at home and abroad. The request for joint DOD exercises, operations, as well as worldwide Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief is increasing. Additionally, training and increased international partnerships have stretched Coast Guard personnel and resources thin as we answer the call. Meanwhile, non-traditional surge

deployments supporting critical needs for operations such as the Southwest Border and Operation Allies Welcome coupled with the requirement to maintain nationwide steady state missions remains high. The ability to recruit, train, and retain are crucial elements to ensure service wide sustainability to answer the increased demand for Coast Guard services to the nation and around the globe. If confirmed, I will continue to strive towards solving the challenges of recruitment, training and retaining our personnel in order to remain Semper Paratus to answer the increased demands of the world's best Coast Guard. Thank you for your time and consideration.

B. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Describe all financial arrangements, deferred compensation agreements, and other continuing dealings with business associates, clients, or customers. Please include information related to retirement accounts, such as a 401(k) or pension plan.

Please see my nominee PFDR.

2. Do you have any commitments or agreements, formal or informal, to maintain employment, affiliation, or practice with any business, association, or other organization during your appointment? If so, please explain.

No.

3. Indicate any investments, obligations, liabilities, or other relationships which could involve potential conflicts of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

None. Please see my nominee PFDR. If any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest arise, I will obtain advice from a Coast Guard ethics official and follow that advice.

4. Describe any business relationship, dealing, or financial transaction which you have had during the last ten years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent, that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

None, but if any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest concern arises, I will obtain advice from a Coast Guard ethics official and follow that advice.

5. Identify any other potential conflicts of interest, and explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

None, but if any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest concern arises, I will obtain advice from a Coast Guard ethics official and follow that advice.

6. Describe any activity during the past ten years, including the names of clients represented, in which you have been engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration and execution of law or public policy.

None

C. LEGAL MATTERS

1. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics, professional misconduct, or retaliation by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, an Inspector General, the Office of Special Counsel, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? If yes:

No

- a. Provide the name of court, agency, association, committee, or group;
- b. Provide the date the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action was issued or initiated;
- c. Describe the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action;
- d. Provide the results of the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action.

2. Have you ever been investigated, arrested, charged, or held by any Federal, State, or other law enforcement authority of any Federal, State, county, or municipal entity, other than for a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain.

No

3. Have you or any business or nonprofit of which you are or were an officer ever been involved as a party in an administrative agency proceeding, criminal proceeding, or civil litigation? If so, please explain.

No

4. Have you ever been convicted (including pleas of guilty or *nolo contendere*) of any criminal violation other than a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain.

No

5. Have you ever been accused, formally or informally, of sexual harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), age, disability, genetic information, marital status, parental status, political affiliation, engagement in a protected Equal Employment Opportunity/Equal Opportunity (EEO/EO) activity, whistleblower activity, or any other basis? If so, please explain.

In 2015, when I was assigned as the Senior Reserve Officer (SRO) at Coast Guard Sector Columbia River, an individual with an ongoing history of disciplinary action was inadvertently transferred to the unit. As the SRO, I worked with Coast Guard Headquarters Reserve Personnel Management to transfer the reserve member back to their original unit. At this time, the individual started the EEO pre-complaint process. The matter was resolved during the pre-complaint process with a phone call between myself, the individual, and both commands.

6. If you have ever served as a general court-martial convening authority involving sexual misconduct or assault, have you ever disapproved the findings of a court-martial related to the offense(s) or reduced the sentence adjudged by a court-martial, other than in connection with a pre-trial agreement?

No

7. Please advise the Committee of any additional information, favorable or unfavorable, which you feel should be disclosed in connection with your nomination.

None

D. RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMITTEE

1. Will you ensure that your department/agency complies with deadlines for information set by congressional committees, and that your department/agency endeavors to timely comply with requests for information from individual Members of Congress, including requests from members in the minority?

Yes

2. Will you ensure that your department/agency does whatever it can to protect congressional witnesses and whistleblowers from reprisal for their testimony and disclosures?

Yes

3. Will you cooperate in providing the Committee with requested witnesses, including technical experts and career employees, with firsthand knowledge of matters of interest to the Committee?

Yes

4. Are you willing to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Congress on such occasions as you may be reasonably requested to do so?

Yes

5. Do you agree, if confirmed, to keep this Committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate Committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided?

Yes, in accordance with law and DHS policy and guidance.

6. Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this Committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request?

Yes, in accordance with law and DHS policy and guidance.

7. Do you agree, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this Committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress?

Yes

(Nominee is to include this signed affidavit along with answers to the above questions.)

F. AFFIDAVIT

Joanna Hiigel being duly sworn, hereby states that he/she has read and signed the foregoing Statement on Biographical and Financial Information and that the information provided therein is, to the best of his/her knowledge, current, accurate, and complete.



Signature of Nominee

Subscribed and sworn before me this 21 day of SEP, 2023.


CAPT MICHAEL R. GESELE

Notary Public

AUTHORIZED PURSUANT TO 18 U.S.C. § 1044a.



Captain Joanna Hiigel

U. S. Coast Guard



Captain Joanna Hiigel recently served as USCG Pacific Area Senior Reserve Officer leading 1,500 Reserve Personnel and currently serves as the Operation Vigilant Sentry Deputy Incident Commander at District Seven. She previously completed duties as Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Reserve Unit, US Transportation Command and deployed in support of global COVID-19 Response ops and Operation Allies Welcome. She graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy in 1995 and reported to USCGC ACTIVE in Port Angeles, WA where she served as Officer of the Deck (OOD), Boarding Officer, Weapons Officer and First Lieutenant.

In 1997, Captain Hiigel reported to Tactical Law Enforcement Team (TACLET) Gulf where she served as the Officer-In-Charge of Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) 8B deploying with US and Dutch Naval vessels with a follow-on tour at Group Seattle as the Assistant Operations Officer.

In 2000, Captain Hiigel transitioned into the USCG Reserve and served at Group/Air Station Port Angeles, WA, followed by Air Station Borinquen in Aguadilla, PR and Sector Mobile, AL. In 2009, CAPT Hiigel transferred to Alameda, CA where she completed Active Duty supporting the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response and the commissioning of USCGC STRATTON with a follow-on tour at Sector Columbia River in Astoria, OR as the Senior Reserve Officer

In 2015, Captain Hiigel transferred to US Indo Pacific Command (US INDOPACOM) in Hawaii. She supported the annual BAKAMLA joint exercise in Indonesia, served as liaison to an Australian government official during a bilateral exercise and completed Active Duty Incident Commander duties in support of Sector New York dielectric oil spill and Incident Management for Coast Guard District 7 following the 2017 Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

From 2017-2019, Captain Hiigel served as the District Thirteen Reserve Chief of Staff leading 350 Pacific Northwest Reserve Personnel. She deployed in support of Hurricane Lane, US INDOPACOM and US SOUTHCOM exercises, as well as WestPac missions in the Philippines.

Captain Hiigel has a Master of Arts degree in Emergency and Disaster Management from the American Military University, a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management from the US Coast Guard Academy and is a graduate from Naval War College with Joint Professional Military Education. She earned Type 1 Incident Commander and Liaison Officer as well as Type 3 Planning Section Chief Incident Management qualifications. Military decorations include the

Defense Superior Service Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), three Coast Guard Commendation Medal (three awards), Coast Guard Achievement Medal (five awards), and Coast Guard Expert Pistol Medal. She has been married for 27 years to Captain Mark Hiigel, USCG and has three children, USCGA 1/C Cadet Tana Hiigel, 1/C Cadet Ellie Hiigel, and high school swimmer, Kendra Hiigel.

Date updated: 09/20/2023

Captain Joanna K. Hiigel

Current Assignment

Jul 23 – present District Seven, Op Vigilant Sentry, Dep Incident Commander, FL, CAPT

Assignment History

Oct 21 – Jul 23 CG PACAREA Senior Reserve Officer, Alameda, CA, CAPT
Jan 22 – Mar 22 (T10) Op Allies Welcome, Unified Command Group, DC, LOFR, CAPT
Sep 19 – Sep 21 CG Reserve Unit US TRANSCOM (USTC), Scott AFB, IL, CO, CAPT
Jun 20 - Sep 20 (T10) USTC, Deployment Distribution Ops Center Chief, Global
COVID Contract Tracing/ Worldwide Military Movement Coord, CAPT
Nov 17 – Sep 19 District 13, Reserve Chief of Staff/ SRO, CAPT
Apr 19 – May 19 (ADOS) District 7, USSOUTHCOM/D7 Exercise, LOFR Lead, CAPT
Mar 19 - Apr 19 (ADOS) PACAREA Philippine WestPac, Advance Team Lead, CAPT
Aug 18 - Sep 18 (ADOS) USINDOPACOM Exercise/ D14 Hurricane Lane, ICS Coach
Oct 15 - Oct 17 CGRU USINDOPACOM, HI, J98 Department Head, CDR/CAPT
Sep 17 - Oct 17 (ADOS) D7 Hurricane Irma/Maria, PSC & CISM Peer, CAPT
Aug 17 – Sep 17 US INDOPACOM, Jakarta, Indonesia Exercise, MARSEC SME, CAPT
Feb 17 – May 17 B3402/C3403 Marina Spill, Sector New York, Incident Commander, CDR
Jul 12 – Sep 15 Sector Columbia River, Senior Reserve Officer (SRO), CDR
Jul 09 - Jun 12 ISC Alameda/Base Support Unit SRO/ Base Alameda, CA, LCDR/CDR
Jan 12 – Apr 12 (ADOS) PacArea, USCGC STRATTON Commissioning, Deputy IC CDR
Jul 10 – Nov 10 (ADOS) FORCECOM, DEEPWATER HORIZON, LOFR, LCDR
Mar 06 – Jun 09 Sector Mobile, Logistics Reserve Dept. Advisor (RDA), LCDR
Nov 02 – Mar 06 CG Air Sta Borinquen, PR, Surface Ops/ Security Officer, LT/LCDR
Jul 00 – Nov 02 Group Port Angeles, WA, Deputy Operations/ Security Officer, LT
Jun 99 - Jul 00 (AD) Group Seattle, WA, Deputy Operations Officer, LTJG/LT
Jul 97 – Jun 99 (AD) TACLET Gulf LEDET 8B, Mobile, AL, OIC, LTJG
Jul 95 - Jun 97 (AD) USCGC ACTIVE (WMEC 618), Weps Officer/1LT, ENS/LTJG

Educational Summary

2019-2020 Joint Professional Military Education, Naval War College
2013-2015 M.A., Emergency and Disaster Management, American Military University
1991-1995 B.S., Business Administration, U.S. Coast Guard Academy

Military Personal Awards and Significant National Recognition or Achievement

Defense Superior Service Medal (1- 2021) Defense MSM (1- 2017)
CG MSM (3- 2019, 2022, 2023) CGCM (3- 2009, 2012, 2015)
CGAM (5- 1999, 2002, 2012, 2017, 2018) CG Pistol Expert (1- 2003)
DHS Secretary's Meritorious Service Silver Medal (2023)
USCIS Management Directorate Award- Interagency Coordination & Leadership (2023)

Significant Current Professional Credentials or Recent Activities

ICS Type 1 Incident Commander (2022)

AREP/ ICS 620- Area Command (2018)

Type 1 Liaison Officer (2022)

USCG Academy Admissions Partner (2018)

Type 3 Planning Section Chief (2013)

FCC Amateur (HAM) Radio Tech License (1995)