

Shipyard Chum, Yachts, Zebra Mussels, and Coastie ROTC: A Peek at Maritime Legislation on Deck for the 115th Congress

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As long-suffering readers of *Window on Washington* may recall, most maritime legislation in recent years ultimately gets pinned onto either the National Defense Authorization Act or the Coast Guard Authorization Act—the two main legislative vehicles that typically pass each year. Although the bills provide the basic authorization for the uniformed services, they also serve as the legislative vehicles for all manner of national defense and maritime-related measures. This year, the Coast Guard Authorization Act itself became mired in disputes, and as a result the Coast Guard provision failed numerous times to clear the hurdles necessary to move forward. Therefore, Coast Guard and Maritime Subcommittee Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-CA) offered the entire Coast Guard bill as an amendment tack-on to the National Defense Authorization Act, in hopes of getting it through, which was accepted by the House Armed Services Committee.

Therefore, as of this writing, the two provisions look set to be considered together, subject to clearing the higher hurdles in the Senate stemming from the procedurally stronger position of the Democrats in that chamber, where the Coast Guard Bill remains a standalone bill. While the fate of the legislation remains unclear, passage of both measures remains a high bipartisan priority on both sides of the Hill, and they are worth a peek to see what to expect this year.

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