

March 21, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Kelly:

The Reserve Officers Association of the United States recently sent the attached letter to the President taking a position against proposed cuts to the Coast Guard fiscal year 2018 budget.

It now appears that those cuts will not take place and the Coast Guard will be given a 2018 budget at fiscal year 2017 levels. While ROA is pleased the administration changed its budget recommendation, the compromise means that the Coast Guard will not benefit from the proposed increases to the defense budget.

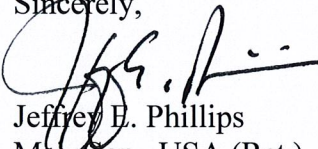
In the *America First, A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again*, it stated, "A budget that puts America first must make the safety of our people its number one priority—because without safety, there can be no prosperity." Without argument, the Coast Guard mission to "...ensure our Nation's maritime safety, security and stewardship" would support increases.

Specifically, ROA asks your consideration for funding to support increases to end strength and equipment for the Coast Guard Reserve. End strength needs to go from 7,000 to 8,000. Inexplicably their end strength was reduced after 2000 at a time the Coast Guard was increasing support to terrorism operations, theater security cooperation and military environmental response.

The National Guard and Reserve Equipment report to Congress reports the need for equipment to Port Security Units that conduct the overseas Naval Coastal Warfare mission of harbor defense and port security operations. They also support contingency operations in response to natural disasters and national emergencies. The PSUs need boats, trucks and communication equipment to meet mission requirements.

ROA has a membership of 50,000 and is the only national military association that exclusively supports all the uniformed reserve components of the United States. Thank you for your efforts on this issue, and your support of our veterans. Please have your staff call Susan Lukas, ROA's legislative director, at 202-646-7713 or e-mail at slukas@roa.org with any question or issue you would like to discuss.

Sincerely,


Jeffrey E. Phillips
Maj. Gen., USA (Ret.)
Executive Director

Sempar Fi, sir!

Attachment