

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Russell Vought, Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

October 21, 2025

Dear Director Vought,

We write today to commend the work of President Trump and his administration for reaching a historic agreement with Finland on October 10, 2025, that will pave the way for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to acquire up to 11 new icebreaker ships for use in the United States.

It's clear the Trump administration understands the significant role the United States Coast Guard (USCG) plays in protecting our nation, as well as how its fleet of icebreakers has proven insufficient to meet current operational demands in recent years. We are encouraged by this agreement between the United States and Finland and are eager to see how it will complement the historic investments we've made this year to support the Coast Guard's mission.

As the allocation and planning phase of this agreement takes shape, we respectfully urge you and your team at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to ensure at least one of the newly procured icebreakers is planned for winter navigation on the Great Lakes.

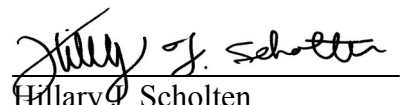
The Great Lakes can easily be overlooked by some as part of the Coast Guard's mission. Relentless winters on the Great Lakes often result in heavy ice accumulation that only icebreakers can navigate through. Without these USCG vessels consistently patrolling the water border between the United States and Canada, our federal law enforcement will be unable to effectively deter border crossings year-round. The Great Lakes are also key pillars of our economy, creating \$3.1 trillion in gross domestic products and employing 25.8 million people. A failure to keep them clear of ice can lead to major economic loss and threaten thousands of jobs, which makes the procurement of a new icebreaker even more significant.

We sincerely appreciate the Trump administration's commitment to reaching agreements that keep our nation safe and ensure the Coast Guard has the resources it needs to succeed. Congratulations again, and we look forward to working with you to bring a new icebreaker ship to the Great Lakes region.

Sincerely,



Tom Barrett
Member of Congress



Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress