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Homeland Security Appropriations
Subcommittee Testimony April 9, 2025

Good Morning Chairman Amodei and Ranking Member Underwood. Thank you for providing an opportunity to testify before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security for Fiscal Year 2026.

My top priority is securing \$130 million in funding for the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Cape May's Multipurpose Indoor Training Facility. This project is essential to the Coast Guard's objective of increasing the Training Center's throughput by 25%, from 4,000 to 5,000 recruits a year. That will make a huge difference for our national security.

This project is the cornerstone of the Coast Guard Training Center recapitalization plan. Funds will be used to design and build an integrated, state-of-the-art indoor training facility. This 67,000 square foot structure will include a 17,000 nautical square foot seamanship training facility, recreation and physical fitness facilities including an indoor track, firefighting training facilities, classrooms, and a graduation ceremony space.

This project addresses major shortcomings. The Coast Guard is currently losing 41% of training time due to inclement weather. These disruptions affect seamanship training and physical fitness training especially. The seamanship facilities are not currently able to accommodate a full 120-person recruit company, even on a good-weather day. The firefighting facilities are nearing the end of their useful life. The physical fitness facilities are inadequate and injury prone. The fitness spaces are also used for graduation ceremonies, which are often over capacity.

The proposed multipurpose training facility will integrate many capabilities into a

single state-of-the-art asset that will undoubtedly be the pride of the Coast Guard. The integrated facility will include new seamanship training, firefighting training, fitness center with indoor tracks, and classrooms. These spaces will also allow larger graduations.

Each capability will be able to fit at least a full recruit company, and the overall maximum capacity for large gatherings will increase from 600 to 1000 people. It will simultaneously address the operational and safety issues related to inclement weather and insufficient space.

This project will vastly improve the quality of training of the thousands of Coast Guard recruits that go through TRACEN every year. It will significantly increase our annual Coast Guard recruitment. This is an essential national security investment that our Nation must advance in this fiscal cycle.

There are other investments that must be made at the training center, including further investments in the barracks facilities. But now the indoor training facility is by far the most important capital need at U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Cape May. I request the committee provide the full amount of \$130 million so that the Coast Guard may proceed with design and build.

Community Project Funding – I also will be resubmitting two community projects funding requests, both through the pre-disaster mitigation accounts. One is for **Wildwood Crest Flood Mitigation**, which will construct an innovative flood control network in the back bays of Wildwood Crest. The second is for **Port Republic Flood Mitigation**, which will repair the dangerous and inadequate dam structure in Port Republic. I will be providing more specific details to committee staff. I thank you again for the opportunity to testify.