



One Hundred Eighteenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2023

Dr. Phill Swagel
Director
Congressional Budget Office
H2-402 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6925

Dear Dr. Swagel:

The U.S. Coast Guard testified earlier this year that it may need as many as nine icebreaking ships as part of its mandate to conduct missions in the Arctic and Antarctic.¹ To address this need, the Coast Guard is undertaking the Polar Security Cutter (PSC) program to recapitalize the service's icebreaker fleet. The PSC program is set to deliver 3 new icebreaking ships for an estimated combined cost of \$2.7 billion.²

The PSC program is fulfilling a critical need for the Coast Guard in ensuring that they have the vessels necessary to carry out their mission in the polar regions. However, the program has already experienced challenges that have delayed the program's timeline. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that the ship design is not yet mature, which has contributed to the program's delayed timeline.³ Members of Congress, as well as GAO, have also raised questions about potential cost growth in the PSC program.

Consequently, the Committee on Homeland Security directs the Director of the Congressional Budget Office to submit a report analyzing the Polar Security Cutter program. The report shall include:

1. An analysis of the estimated costs of the program in the context of other current and past Coast Guard and similar Navy shipbuilding programs;

¹ *Review of Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Request for the Coast Guard: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 118th Congress (April 18, 2023).*

² RONALD O'ROURKE, CONG. RESEARCH SERV., RL 34391, COAST GUARD POLAR SECURITY CUTTER (POLAR ICEBREAKER) PROGRAM: BACKGROUND AND ISSUES FOR CONGRESS (2023).

³ U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE, GAO-23-105949, COAST GUARD ACQUISITIONS: POLAR SECURITY CUTTER NEEDS TO STABILIZE DESIGN BEFORE STARTING CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVE SCHEDULE OVERSIGHT (2023).

2. An independent cost estimate of the PSC program at a programmed level of 3 ships, 6 ships, and 9 ships; and
3. Other related matters as the Director deems appropriate.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Connor Roberts on the Committee staff at 202-226-8417.

Sincerely,



Mark E. Green, M.D.
Chairman
House Homeland Security
Committee



Carlos A. Gimenez
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation and
Maritime Security