

**TRANSFER OF THE COAST GUARD TO THE  
NAVY. HEARINGS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE  
ON INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE  
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SIXTY-SIXTH CONGRESS SECOND SESSION  
ON H. R. 5516, MAY 27, 1920, PART I**

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Transfer of the Coast Guard to the Navy. Hearings Before the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce of the House of Representatives, Sixty-Sixth Congress Second Session on H. R. 5516, May 27, 1920, Part I by Various

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# VARIOUS

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ON H. R. 5516, MAY 27, 1920, PART I**



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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SIXTY-SIXTH CONGRESS.

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## TRANSFER OF THE COAST GUARD TO THE NAVY.

COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Thursday, May 27, 1920.*

The committee met at 10.30 o'clock a. m., Hon. John J. Esch (chairman) presiding.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee has before it H. R. 5516, introduced by Mr. Campbell of Pennsylvania, being a bill to permanently transfer the United States Coast Guard from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department. Mr. Campbell, who is your first witness?

### STATEMENT OF HON. GUY E. CAMPBELL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I would like to make a preliminary statement which I have prepared.

I have requested this hearing in order that I might lay before the committee the project of transferring the United States Coast Guard from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department. I have made a thorough study of this question, and as a result of my study and investigation I have become thoroughly convinced that its accomplishment in accordance with the bill which I have introduced (H. R. 5516) will accomplish a material economy in governmental expenditures and at the same time increase the efficiency of operation of the duties which are now performed by the Coast Guard as a separate organization under the Treasury Department. I will endeavor to show through the testimony of the witnesses who will appear at this hearing that this economy is real and that the efficiency will follow the enactment of this legislation. I have secured information from practically every officer in the Coast Guard and a very large number of the enlisted personnel, and I find that the sentiment of these people is overwhelmingly in favor of this transfer in accordance with my bill. I have obtained statistics as to operating expenses of the various units of the Coast Guard and find that by the elimination of certain duplications which exist in the organization of the Coast Guard, as compared with the organization of the Navy, the immediate saving to the Government will approximate a million dollars a year.

In this estimate I am substantiated by the recommendation of the President's Commission on Efficiency and Economy, which made its report to the President in 1912, giving him the information that the saving would amount to the figure that I have mentioned. In addition to the economy which will result from the elimination of



duplications and overhead expenses there are certain other features of economy, such as the utilization of certain vessels of the Navy in Coast Guard work, making it unnecessary to make appropriations for the building of new vessels, and also as a result of purchasing various supplies through naval organization in large quantities rather than through the existing Coast Guard system in much smaller quantities. In regard to the efficiency features I wish to draw attention to the fact that by assuming the performance of Coast Guard duties there opens to the young naval officers an excellent field of training in seamanship and navigation, which is hardly possible for them if the Navy does not perform this duty on account the fact that the present naval duties do not require of the naval vessels the type of work which brings this training. It would also afford opportunity to young Coast Guard officers to acquire training that would be of value in the event of war and make available at the present time trained officers badly needed by the Navy, and would in no way impair the work now required of the Coast Guard under the Treasury Department—instead it would add to the efficiency of the work. Further, the transfer of these duties to the Navy Department will afford the shipping interests of the country a far greater protection than is possible under the present system, because of the fact that the Navy has available for this work a greater number of vessels eminently suitable for the purpose, better suited in fact than any vessel the Coast Guard now operates, and which can be operated with greater efficiency and with less expense, and also because of the larger number of these vessels available, more of them can be detailed to this work and our extensive coast line more efficiently covered for the purpose of rendering assistance to vessels in distress and otherwise in need of assistance from Government vessels generally. I will endeavor to show that in making this transfer of the Coast Guard from the Treasury to the Navy Department that the operation of the functions of the Treasury Department will be in no way impaired.

To bring forth these facts I have requested the attendance at this hearing of officers of both the Navy and the Coast Guard, who are qualified to give authentic testimony on the subject, and representatives of our maritime interests on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and the Great Lakes. Through the officers of the Navy I will endeavor to show that the work of the Coast Guard can be efficiently performed by the Naval Establishment and that the Naval Establishment is willing and ready to undertake this duty and that the vessels they will operate in the work can be operated at less expense than a similar number of like vessels can be operated by the Coast Guard independently of the Navy.

Through the officers of the Coast Guard I will endeavor to show that there is a duplication in the maintenance of the Coast Guard as a separate organization and that the Coast Guard is in fact a miniature Navy; that its officers and men are trained to naval duties as well as to the particular duties of the Coast Guard; that they are subject to the same discipline; that they receive the same pay and allowances and that with respect to the pay and allowances of the Coast Guard officers whom we propose to transfer by this measure there will be not one cent of added expense to the Government.

Through the gentlemen representing the maritime interests I will endeavor to show that the shipping interests of the country are thoroughly cognizant of the features of this measure and that they heartily indorse it and are anxious that this bill be enacted speedily into law.

Through certain letters and a list of commercial bodies who have favorably indorsed this bill I will endeavor to show that the project is very generally approved of throughout the country by many prominent organizations who are interested in the efficient performance by the Federal Government of the duties enumerated as Coast Guard duties and that these bodies are convinced that this project will accomplish the economy and efficiency which I claim for it.

The gentlemen I wish to call to give the committee intimate information on this subject are the honorable the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels; the honorable the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin D. Roosevelt; Admiral R. E. Coontz, Chief of Naval Operations; Admiral Thomas Washington, Chief of the Bureau of Navigation; Admiral Samuel McGowan, Paymaster General; Capt. H. E. Yarnell, Office Naval Operations; Capt. W. McDowell, Bureau of Navigation; Capt. O. W. Koester, Bureau of Steam Engineering; Senior Capt. J. C. Cantwell, United States Coast Guard; Capt. F. C. Billard, United States Coast Guard, aid to commodore commandant; Capt. H. G. Hamlet, personnel officer, United States Coast Guard; Capt. E. D. Jones, United States Coast Guard, Division of Communication; Capt. P. F. Roach, United States Coast Guard, Division of Recruiting; Capt. C. F. Howell, United States Coast Guard, commanding United States Coast Guard cutter *Earp*; Capt. C. S. Root, United States Coast Guard, engineer officer United States Coast Guard cutter *Earp*; Capt. A. F. Patterson, United States Coast Guard, New York Division; Capt. F. E. Baggar, United States Coast Guard; Capt. P. H. Harrison, United States Coast Guard, commanding east coast group Florida Coast Patrol; Boatswain Nils Sjoberg, secretary Warrant Officers' Association, United States Coast Guard.

To give testimony as to the recommendations of the President's Commission of Efficiency and Economy of 1912, I will call Dr. W. F. Willoughby, Washington, D. C.

To give testimony as to the opinion of the American shipping interests I have requested the attendance of Mr. W. L. Marvin, vice president and general manager, American Steamship Owners' Association. Mr. Marvin is authorized to express the opinion of the steamship interests of both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and of the Great Lakes.

I am in receipt of letters from former officials of the Treasury Department who in the past have had supervision of the Coast Guard and who have expressed themselves as of the opinion that this project will achieve the economy and efficiency claimed for it. On account of business reasons they are unable to attend the hearing. They have, however, authorized me to present their opinions as expressed in their letters. These gentlemen are Mr. R. O. Bailey, formerly Assistant Secretary of the Treasury; Mr. C. D. Norton, formerly Assistant Secretary of the Treasury; Mr. Beekman Winthrop, for-

merly Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and also formerly Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

ROBERT WINTHROP & Co.,  
New York, September 15, 1919.

MY DEAR MR. CAMPBELL: Please excuse my not replying before this to your letter of August 16, but I have been away on a vacation.

From my experience of two years as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in charge of the Revenue Cutter Service and four years as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, I feel that it would be to the best interests of the Government to transfer the Coast Guard Service from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department. My only interest in such a transfer is to increase the efficiency of both services. I feel that the work which the Coast Guard does in times of peace could be much more effectively performed if the organization was under the direction of the Navy Department. The prevention of customs frauds—originally one of the most important reasons for the establishment of the Coast Guard—has now become but an insignificant part of its duties. Assistance to ships in distress, destruction of derelicts, and the patrolling of coast and protection of our interests in the smaller nations to the south of us in times of insurrection, could, in my opinion, be better and more economically performed if the service was transferred to the Navy Department. In times of war there is no question. The service at such times is immediately transferred to the Navy Department and unquestionably the duties then performed by the Coast Guard Service could be more expeditiously carried out if it was at all times a part of the Navy and did not have to be amalgamated in times of confusion and stress incident to a war.

I am afraid that I can not give any advice with regard to the details of the amalgamation. Before doing so I should desire to hear from both Navy and Coast Guard officials.

Trusting that you will be successful in securing the amalgamation, and with kindest regards, believe me,

Very sincerely, yours,

BEEKMAN WINTHROP.

HON. GUY E. CAMPBELL,  
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

THE S. S. WHITE DENTAL MANUFACTURING Co.,  
Philadelphia, Pa., September 3, 1919.

MR. GUY E. CAMPBELL,  
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. CAMPBELL: Accept my thanks for your letter of August 16, inclosing copy of H. R. 5518, which you have introduced in the House, providing for the permanent transfer of the Coast Guard Service from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department.

I am inclosing copy of my letter of July 22 to Capt. F. S. Van Boskerck (134 South Second Street, Philadelphia), which will give you some of the impressions that I obtained as an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

Appreciating your courtesy, I remain,

Very truly, yours.

R. O. BAILEY,  
Commercial manager.

JULY 22, 1919.

CAPT. F. S. VAN BOSKERCK,  
134 South Second Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

DEAR CAPTAIN: Our recent discussion and your letter of July 17 on the subject of the proposed Congressional action to cover the Coast Guard Service into the Navy make it possible for me to set down some of the impressions I obtained as an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, when the then Revenue-Cutter Service was one of the bureaus within my jurisdiction.

At that time the preliminary work was done toward the later consolidation of the Life-Saving Service with the Revenue-Cutter Service, when the name Coast Guard was adopted. This was a business economy and has resulted in increased efficiency.