



**OFFICIAL STATEMENT
OF
MAJ. GEN. JOHN B. HASHEM, U.S. ARMY (RET.)**

**FOR THE
U.S. HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

**ON
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
FY 2027 BUDGET REQUEST**

APRIL 15, 2026

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The Reserve Organization of America (ROA) is a congressionally chartered military service organization, incorporated under Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501(c)(19). Its membership includes servicemembers of all ranks, veterans, and family members from across our nation's eight uniformed services who were separated under honorable conditions. ROA is the only national military service organization dedicated solely and exclusively to supporting the Reserve Components.

Established in 1922 by General of the Armies John J. "Black Jack" Pershing during the significant post-World War I drawdown, ROA was founded to advocate for a strong national defense and to advance the creation of a trained corps of reserve officers capable of anchoring rapid military expansion in times of war. Under ROA's congressional charter, granted in 1950, this purpose remains unchanged: to promote the development and execution of policies that ensure an adequate national defense. ROA fulfills this mandate by providing expertise on the organization, employment, and resourcing of America's Reserve Components.

Chief Executive Officer:

Maj. Gen. John B. Hashem, U.S. Army (Ret.)

jhashem@roa.org

Director, Legislation and Military Policy:

Matthew L. Schwartzman

mschwartzman@roa.org

DISCLOSURE OF FEDERAL GRANTS OR CONTRACTS

The Reserve Officers Association of the United States, now doing business as the Reserve Organization of America, has not received any grants, contracts, or subcontracts from the federal government in the past three years.

CURRICULUM VITAE

John B. Hashem is a retired United States Army major general with over 40 years of service in the Army Reserve, encompassing roles in infantry, psychological operations, civil affairs, and strategic planning. He currently serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Reserve Organization of America, a position he assumed in September 2025, following his retirement from active service.

Hashem's awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Combat Infantryman Badge, Ranger Tab, Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, Office of the Secretary of Defense Staff Badge, and the Army Staff Badge.

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Amodei, Ranking Member Cuellar, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, the Reserve Organization of America (ROA) appreciates the opportunity to submit this statement in connection with the Subcommittee's hearing on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget request for the United States Coast Guard and other components of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). ROA urges the Subcommittee to fully support the Coast Guard's FY 2027 budget request as essential to sustaining readiness and meeting growing operational demands.

The Coast Guard is operating amid rising mission requirements while confronting recurring lapses in appropriations that directly undermine readiness, morale, and mission execution. Force Design 2028 provides a clear strategic framework to address these challenges, but its success depends on stable, timely appropriations and sustained congressional oversight.

The recommendations below identify targeted actions Congress can take in the upcoming fiscal year to protect the Coast Guard from funding disruptions, fully resource its modernization priorities, strengthen its Reserve Component, ensure the stability of critical Public Health Service Ready Reserve Corps partners, and safeguard quality of service across the Total Force.

END THE DHS FUNDING LAPSE AND FUND THE COAST GUARD SEPARATELY IF NECESSARY

The ongoing lapse in DHS appropriations is directly undermining Coast Guard readiness, morale, and operational effectiveness. The Service has experienced multiple shutdowns in a single fiscal year, leaving personnel unpaid, training suspended, maintenance deferred, and critical infrastructure at risk. The Coast Guard is uniquely disadvantaged by being tied to broader DHS funding disputes that have no connection to its missions. ROA urges Congress to take immediate action to end the current funding lapse and, if necessary, to fund the Coast Guard separately from DHS to ensure stable, on-time appropriations. The men and women executing Coast Guard missions worldwide should never be collateral damage in unrelated budgetary gridlock.

FULLY FUND THE COAST GUARD'S FY2027 BUDGET REQUEST TO ENABLE FORCE DESIGN 2028

The Coast Guard's FY 2027 budget request of \$15.6 billion is a prudent and necessary investment to execute Force Design 2028 and meet growing operational demands. The request supports critical fleet recapitalization programs, including the Offshore Patrol Cutter, Arctic Security Cutter, Waterways Commerce Cutter, and HC-130J transition, all of which address aging platforms operating well beyond their intended service lives. These investments are central to maritime security, polar access, aviation readiness, and inland waterways commerce. Failure to fully fund these programs will widen readiness gaps and drive higher long-term costs. ROA urges full funding to translate Force Design 2028 from strategy into sustained, operational capability.

ENSURE COAST GUARD RESERVE APPROPRIATIONS SUPPORT GROWTH TO 8,500 AND EXPANDED MOBILIZATION

The FY2026 NDAA’s authorization of 8,500 Selected Reserve billets reflects strong congressional support for a more capable Coast Guard Reserve. Force Design 2028 envisions a Reserve prepared for full-scale mobilization and expanded operational support, a direction already reflected in improved recruiting outcomes. However, end-strength growth without proportional increases in recruiting, training, and retention funding will undermine readiness rather than enhance it. Reserve training currently represents a small share of the Coast Guard’s Operations and Support budget and must scale responsibly alongside force growth. ROA urges appropriators to ensure Reserve funding supports functional readiness, not just authorized strength.

EXERCISE STRONG OVERSIGHT OF THE DHS–HHS AGREEMENT GOVERNING THE PHS READY RESERVE CORPS

The recently signed agreement designating DHS as the “fiscal home” of the Public Health Service Ready Reserve Corps was intended to stabilize a critical capability after the rescission of dedicated appropriations. While ROA initially viewed this arrangement as constructive, stakeholders have raised concerns regarding implementation challenges that remain insufficiently transparent. These issues raise broader questions about administrative support, funding execution, and readiness. Congressional oversight is necessary to determine whether the agreement is meeting its objectives or requires refinement. ROA urges the Subcommittee to closely examine implementation and pursue corrective action as needed.

PROTECT PAY, BENEFITS, AND QUALITY OF SERVICE ACROSS THE COAST GUARD AND TOTAL FORCE

The Coast Guard’s effectiveness depends on an integrated Total Force of active-duty members, reservists, civilians, and Public Health Service officers, all of whom are harmed by recurring lapses in appropriations.

ROA supports S. 3168, the *Shutdown Fairness Act*, and urges its codification to ensure uninterrupted pay for servicemembers—including Reserve Component members performing active service or Inactive Duty Training (IDT) during a shutdown. However, pay continuity alone does not preserve readiness.

When appropriations lapse, routine IDT, annual training, and Professional Military Education (PME) are typically suspended because they are not designated as excepted activities, resulting in lost training time, delayed qualifications, canceled drills, and uncompensated readiness loss.

ROA urges Congress to adopt a more comprehensive approach by designating scheduled Reserve training and PME as excepted activities during a funding lapse and authorizing the

orders, travel, and support necessary to execute that training. Protecting pay, benefits, and the ability to train during funding disruptions is essential to sustaining morale, retention, and mission readiness across the Coast Guard Reserve, Public Health Service Ready Reserve Corps, and the Total Force.

CONCLUSION

The United States Coast Guard and its Reserve Component deliver an extraordinary capability for the Total Force and America, safeguarding maritime security, enabling global commerce, and responding to crises at home and abroad. Continued funding instability and under-resourcing of key capabilities risk eroding these outcomes at a moment of growing strategic demand.

By ending the DHS funding lapse, fully resourcing the FY2027 budget request, supporting responsible Reserve Component growth, exercising robust oversight of the PHS Ready Reserve Corps agreement, and protecting pay and benefits across the Total Force, Congress can translate strategic intent into operational readiness.

ROA stands ready to work with the Subcommittee and Congress to ensure the Coast Guard—and its Public Health Service partners—remain resilient, capable, and always ready. *Semper Paratus*.

Questions regarding this statement may be directed to:

Matthew L. Schwartzman
Director, Legislation and Military Policy
Reserve Organization of America
mschwartzman@roa.org | (202) 646-7713