

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4508

AN ACT

To commend the outstanding efforts in response to Hurricane Katrina by members and employees of the Coast Guard, to provide temporary relief to certain persons affected by such hurricane with respect to certain laws administered by the Coast Guard, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Coast Guard Hurri-
5 cane Relief Act of 2005”.

6 **SEC. 2. COMMENDATION, RECOGNITION, AND THANKS FOR**

7 **COAST GUARD PERSONNEL.**

8 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

9 (1) On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina
10 struck the Gulf of Mexico coastal region of Lou-
11 isiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, causing the worst
12 natural disaster in United States history.

13 (2) The Coast Guard strategically positioned its
14 aircraft, vessels, and personnel the day before Hurri-
15 cane Katrina made landfall and launched search and
16 rescue teams within hours after Hurricane Katrina
17 struck.

18 (3) The Coast Guard moved its operations in
19 areas threatened by Hurricane Katrina to higher
20 ground and mobilized cutters, small boats, and air-
21 craft from all around the United States to help in
22 the response to Hurricane Katrina.

23 (4) The response to Hurricane Katrina by
24 members and employees of the Coast Guard has
25 been immediate, invaluable, and courageous.

1 (5) The Coast Guard rescued more than 33,000
2 people affected by Hurricane Katrina through the
3 air and by water, including evacuations of hospitals,
4 and has been at the center of efforts to restore com-
5 merce to areas affected by Hurricane Katrina by
6 clearing shipping channels, replacing aids to naviga-
7 tion, and securing uprooted oil rigs.

8 (6) The Coast Guard was at the forefront of
9 the Federal response to the numerous oil and chem-
10 ical spills in the area affected by Hurricane Katrina.

11 (7) Members and employees of the Coast
12 Guard—

13 (A) have shown great leadership in helping
14 to coordinate relief efforts with respect to Hur-
15 ricane Katrina;

16 (B) have used their expertise and special-
17 ized skills to provide immediate assistance to
18 victims and survivors of the hurricane; and

19 (C) have set up remote assistance oper-
20 ations in the affected areas in order to best pro-
21 vide service to the Gulf of Mexico coastal re-
22 gion.

23 (8) Members and employees of the Coast Guard
24 have worked together to bring clean water, food, and
25 resources to victims and survivors in need.

1 (b) COMMENDATION, RECOGNITION, AND THANKS.—

2 The Congress—

3 (1) commends the outstanding efforts in re-
4 sponse to Hurricane Katrina by members and em-
5 ployees of the Coast Guard;

6 (2) recognizes that the actions of these individ-
7 uals went above and beyond the call of duty; and

8 (3) thanks them for their continued dedication
9 and service.

10 (c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
11 gress that the Coast Guard should play a major role in
12 response to any future national emergency or disaster
13 caused by a natural event in the United States in a coastal
14 or offshore area.

15 **SEC. 3. TEMPORARY AUTHORIZATION TO EXTEND THE DU-**
16 **RATION OF LICENSES, CERTIFICATES OF**
17 **REGISTRY, AND MERCHANT MARINERS' DOC-**
18 **UMENTS.**

19 (a) LICENSES AND CERTIFICATES OF REGISTRY.—
20 Notwithstanding section 7106 and 7107 of title 46,
21 United States Code, the Secretary of the department in
22 which the Coast Guard is operating may temporarily ex-
23 tend the duration of a license or certificate of registry
24 issued for an individual under chapter 71 of that title until
25 not later than February 28, 2006, if—

1 (1) the individual is a resident of Alabama,
2 Mississippi, or Louisiana; or

3 (2) the individual is a resident of any other
4 State, and the records of the individual—

5 (A) are located at the Coast Guard facility
6 in New Orleans that was damaged by Hurri-
7 cane Katrina; or

8 (B) were damaged or lost as a result of
9 Hurricane Katrina.

10 (b) MERCHANT MARINERS' DOCUMENTS.—Notwith-
11 standing section 7302(g) of title 46, United States Code,
12 the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard
13 is operating may temporarily extend the duration of a
14 merchant mariners' document issued for an individual
15 under chapter 73 of that title until not later than Feb-
16 ruary 28, 2006, if—

17 (1) the individual is a resident of Alabama,
18 Mississippi, or Louisiana; or

19 (2) the individual is a resident of any other
20 State, and the records of the individual—

21 (A) are located at the Coast Guard facility
22 in New Orleans that was damaged by Hurri-
23 cane Katrina; or

24 (B) were damaged or lost as a result of
25 Hurricane Katrina.

1 (c) MANNER OF EXTENSION.—Any extensions grant-
2 ed under this section may be granted to individual seamen
3 or a specifically identified group of seamen.

4 **SEC. 4. TEMPORARY AUTHORIZATION TO EXTEND THE DU-**
5 **RATION OF VESSEL CERTIFICATES OF IN-**
6 **SPECTION.**

7 (a) AUTHORITY TO EXTEND.—Notwithstanding sec-
8 tion 3307 and 3711(b) of title 46, United States Code,
9 the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard
10 is operating may temporarily extend the duration or the
11 validity of a certificate of inspection or a certificate of
12 compliance issued under chapter 33 or 37, respectively,
13 of title 46, United States Code, for up to 3 months for
14 a vessel inspected by a Coast Guard Marine Safety Office
15 located in Alabama, Mississippi, or Louisiana.

16 (b) EXPIRATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority
17 provided under this section expires February 28, 2006.

18 **SEC. 5. PRESERVATION OF LEAVE LOST DUE TO HURRI-**
19 **CANE KATRINA OPERATIONS.**

20 (a) PRESERVATION OF LEAVE.—Notwithstanding
21 section 701(b) of title 10, United States Code, any mem-
22 ber of the Coast Guard who serves on active duty for a
23 continuous period of 30 days, who is assigned to duty or
24 otherwise detailed in support of units or operations in the
25 Eighth Coast Guard District area of responsibility for ac-

1 tivities to mitigate the consequences of, or assist in the
2 recovery from, Hurricane Katrina, during the period be-
3 ginning on August 28, 2005, and ending on January 1,
4 2006, and who would otherwise lose any accumulated leave
5 in excess of 60 days as a consequence of such assignment,
6 is authorized to retain an accumulated total of up to 90
7 days of leave.

8 (b) EXCESS LEAVE.—Leave in excess of 60 days ac-
9 cumulated under subsection (a) shall be lost unless used
10 by the member before the commencement of the second
11 fiscal year following the fiscal year in which the assign-
12 ment commences, or in the case of a Reserve members,
13 the year in which the period of active service is completed.

Passed the House of Representatives December 14,
2005.

Attest:

Clerk.

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