

**AN ACT**

To authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal year 2004, to amend various laws administered by the Coast Guard, and for other purposes.

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**SEC. 613. STUDY OF THE ROLE OF COAST GUARD ICE BREAKERS IN SUPPORTING UNITED STATES OPERATIONS IN THE ANTARCTIC AND THE ARCTIC.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commandant of the Coast Guard may enter into an arrangement with the Polar Research Board and the Marine Board of the National Academy of Sciences to—

(1) conduct a study of the role of Coast Guard icebreakers in supporting United States operations in the Antarctic and the Arctic, including—

(A) roles in logistics and material support and a general inventory of contributions to science in both regions;

(B) alternative methods for staging, supporting, and conducting Arctic and Antarctic activities other than by use of Coast Guard ice-breakers;

(C) the operational status of the POLAR STAR and POLAR SEA, including the projected life expectancy of vessel systems, and strategies for extending the service life of these vessels; and

(D) key short-term and long-term functions provided by the Coast Guard icebreaker fleet and how these functions might be addressed under different service life extension and replacement scenarios; and

(2) conduct a study of changes in the roles and missions of Coast Guard icebreakers in the support of future marine operations in the Arctic that may develop due to environmental change, including—

(A) the amount and kind of icebreaking support that may be required in the future to support marine operations in the Northern Sea Route and the Northwest Passage;

(B) the suitability of the Polar Class ice-breakers for these new roles; and

(C) appropriate changes in existing laws governing Coast Guard icebreaking operations and the potential for new operating regimes.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Act, the Commandant shall submit a report on the studies required under subsection (a) to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(c) **CHARGE FOR ICEBREAKING SERVICES.**—After the date on which the Commandant submits the report under subsection (b), and notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating may charge other Federal agencies for the Secretary's cost of providing icebreaking and related transportation services to those agencies.