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On June 6, 2013, the House Appropriations Committee approved the Fiscal Year 2014 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill (H.R. 2217). The bill contains a total of \$9.9 billion for the Coast Guard, a decrease of \$543 million from FY 2013 enacted levels. This funding will have implications for the Coast Guard's polar icebreaker vessels, which support scientific research and other U.S. interests in polar regions.

Currently, the U.S. polar icebreaking fleet consists of one medium polar icebreaker (*Healy*), which services primarily as a National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration research vessel, and one heavy polar ice breaker (*Polar Star*). *Polar Star* has exceeded its 30-year service life, and the Coast Guard's 2014 budget requests continued funding toward the construction of a new icebreaker to replace *Polar Star*.

The Coast Guard's recent strategy document for the Arctic highlights the importance of icebreakers to Arctic research, stating, "The United States must have adequate icebreaking capability to support research that advances fundamental understanding of the region and its evolution."

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter, Healy
