

U.S. Reps. Comer, Grothman: Probe U.S. Coast Guard's mishandling of serious misconduct

Posted on Tuesday, Dec 12, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

WASHINGTON—House Committee on Oversight and Accountability Chairman James Comer (R-Ky.) and Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs Chairman Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.) are opening a probe into the U.S. Coast Guard's (USCG) mishandling of serious misconduct, including racism, hazing, discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape, and the withholding of internal investigations into these offenses from Congress and the public.

“Recently, it was reported to Congress that Operation Fouled Anchor, a USCG investigation into sexual abuse allegations at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, found that many senior leaders ignored or purposefully concealed these allegations. The investigation suggested systemic failures on the part of senior USCG leadership to accurately report and prosecute these crimes. The investigation also concluded that perpetrators often evaded prosecution, were promoted, retired under satisfactory circumstances, or were honorably discharged,” **wrote the lawmakers.**

In addition to Operation Fouled Anchor, on November 28, 2023, the Committee received an April 2015 Coast Guard report titled “Culture of Respect Integrated Process Team Phase I Report.” Among the concerning findings of the report, USCG investigators found systemic issues including a lack of training on sexual assault and harassment; methods used by the USCG to track sexual assault and harassment were ineffective and inefficient; USCG training did not include a focus on sexual assault or harassment; senior leaders misunderstood basic USCG leadership competencies; and USCG duty health services personnel were not trained on how to recognize and care for victims of sexual assault and rape.

“The Committee has serious concerns that congressional committees would not have been notified of these reports, and the serious allegations contained within them, if it had not been for the threat of public reporting. The Committee will investigate the extent to which USCG leaders purposefully withheld and concealed reports of misconduct from Congress. By withholding and concealing these reports, the USCG may have obstructed the ability of Congress to carry out constitutionally mandated oversight authority and legislation to address these issues. USCG may also have prevented actionable change within the agency to combat the appalling findings within these reports,” **continued the lawmakers.** “