February 5, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

As members of the Virginia Congressional delegation, we are writing to urge you to craft a Fiscal Year 2019 Presidential Budget based on a clearly articulated National Security Strategy, a National Defense Strategy, and responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars – not on narrow interests disconnected from these priorities. At a time when our military continues to rebuild and restore readiness, critical taxpayer dollars should only be used to make our Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps more lethal and more capable.

We were disturbed to hear of a letter by the Florida delegation requesting to move a Navy nuclear powered aircraft carrier to Naval Station (NAVSTA) Mayport citing "strategic and operational value." The Navy annually briefs members of Congress on its Strategic Laydown and Dispersal Plan and, as of 2017, did not identify a need nor a desire to move an aircraft carrier from NAVSTA Norfolk to NAVSTA Mayport within the next 5 years. The Florida delegation's letter in favor of such a move referenced Department of Defense (DoD) and Navy reports from 2009 and 2010 because the concept has not appeared in studies since. Greater value should be placed on current plans crafted by Navy leadership, based on current threats, rather than outdated reports drafted from almost a decade ago.

When the Navy studied the cost impacts of relocating an aircraft carrier from NAVSTA Norfolk to NAVSTA Mayport in 2008, the estimated nonrecurring cost was $565 million. In an updated assessment in 2010, the Navy found that the costs had increased to $589.7 million. This number only represents the up-front costs and not the day-to-day costs of maintaining such a capability. In 2008, the Navy estimated that homeporting an aircraft carrier at NAVSTA Mayport instead of NAVSTA Norfolk would result in a recurring annual cost of $25.5 million. Defense funding must be prioritized to restore readiness and defend the homeland, not to fund a non-existent requirement and duplicative capability that will cost the Navy nearly $1 billion over the next 15 years.

The entire Hampton Roads area has clear strategic value as the existing east coast aircraft carrier hub by boasting a world-class harbor, ship repair and overhaul capabilities, as well as an unmatched confluence of joint warfare components, including surface, aviation, expeditionary, and special operations activities. Additionally, the Master Jet Base at Naval Air Station Oceana hosts the Carrier Air Wings assigned to these ships and minimizes the transit times for aircraft conducting routine training operations aboard the ship. The Navy faces no shortage of necessary fleet resources in the form of nuclear ports, which include five sites in addition to NAVSTA Norfolk, Virginia: Bremerton, Washington; Everett, Washington; Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Yokosuka, Japan; and San Diego, California. All six of these locations have the experience and
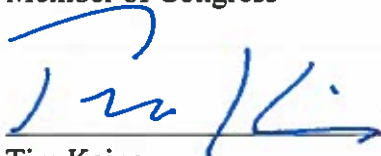
capability needed to homeport a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier should the Navy need to pursue greater strategic and operational dispersal.

We strongly recommend that you remain consistent to your own Department of Defense's plans and look to allocate funds in your Fiscal Year 2019 budget for areas of Navy's needs based upon established requirements.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

Scott Taylor
Member of Congress

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Thomas A. Garrett Jr.
Member of Congress

Bob Goodlatte
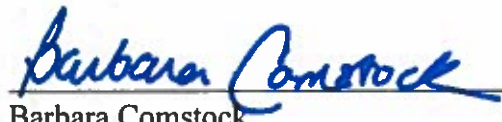Member of Congress

Dave Brat
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
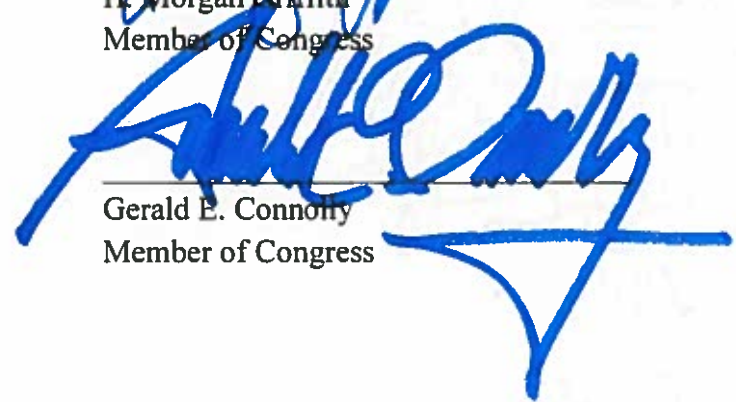Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress

Barbara Comstock
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly
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