

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 17, 2020

The Honorable James F. Geurts
Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development, and Acquisition)
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Mr. Geurts,

We are writing to express strong support for the shipbuilding and ship maintenance industrial base. Because of our support of this critical but fragile industry, we are deeply concerned about their viability during the national emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We applaud the actions you directed in your March 20 memorandum and encourage your continued engagement on contracting issues which may arise as the shipbuilding and ship maintenance industrial base works through the pandemic.

We believe that the private shipbuilding and ship maintenance industrial base is performing a vital public function during this pandemic and should remain open for business, sustaining employment and providing products and services which contribute to our Navy's recapitalization and readiness. During these challenging times, we are particularly concerned about the shipbuilding and ship repair enterprise and safety of our ship workers. We would ask your support for the following items:

- We request your support in ensuring that the safety of our shipworkers remains the bedrock of any future discussion with additional contractual adjustments provided to alleviate any hazards experienced by workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Similar to the authority provided by section 3610 of the CARES Act (P.L. 116-136), we request your support with expeditious contractual adjustments between Navy and industry to ensure a healthy partnership that fully alleviates the negative impacts, to both workers and shipyards, associated with COVID-19 relief.
- Pursuant to section 4003 of the CARES Act, we request your support to expediting access to loans and loan guarantees provided that could be used to assist the shipbuilding and ship maintenance industrial base.
- To ensure continued small business participation in ship repair, your assurance that previously programmed continuous maintenance availability will continue.
- To ensure a sustained industrial base, development of the LHA-9 acquisition effort and use of the FY19 LHA-9 Advanced Procurement monies to accelerate construction of an additional large deck amphibious ship.

We would like to thank you for your leadership of Navy acquisition during this critical time for our Navy and our nation. We look forward to continuing to work with you on providing for our future fleet with a strong, robust, and resilient shipbuilding and ship maintenance industrial base.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Warner
U.S. Senator

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

Ben Cline
Member of Congress

Denver Riggleman
Member of Congress

Jennifer Wexton
Member of Congress

Tim Kaine
U.S. Senator

Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress

H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress

Abigail D. Spanberger
Member of Congress