

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 17, 2022

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro
Secretary of the Navy
Office of the Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Secretary Del Toro:

As you work to finalize the Department of the Navy's FY 2023 budget, we write to respectfully request support for a robust shipbuilding budget, and to include the procurement of three Arleigh Burke-class Destroyers. Additionally, we urge the Department to request multi-year procurement authority for Flight III Arleigh Burke-class Destroyers, and submit an acquisition strategy that addresses the Department's plans for the Large Surface Combatant known as DDG(X).

Congress consistently supports the national policy of achieving at least a 355-ship fleet as codified in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018. We urge the Navy to develop a multi-year procurement program of 15 destroyers which maximizes the procured number of ships under the contract, with the understanding that if adequately funded, the industrial base can support at least three ships per year. We remind the Department of the strong, bipartisan, and bicameral support for the Flight III destroyers, and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 requiring a report to congress on the potential benefits of a multiyear contract for the period of fiscal years 2023 through 2027.

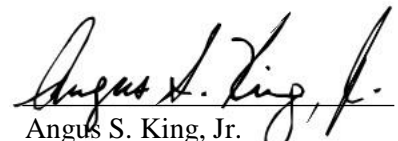
Furthermore, to address the growing threat of China and its increasing fleet size, hedge against a belligerent Russia, and assure allies, we urge you to mature and submit the Department's acquisition plan for the next Large Surface Combatant. We remind you of Congress' intent for the Navy to implement an acquisition strategy for DDG(X) based on a collaborative design, development, and production approach between the Government and industry. A strategy closely tied to the industrial base and with extensive oversight will help prevent the issues of cost increases, program delays, and end-product reliability issues seen in other ship classes.

These issues are imperative to maintaining our National Defense Strategy and advantage in the maritime commons, and sustaining our military-industrial base. Thank you for your consideration and service to our country.


Sincerely,



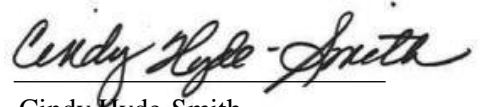
Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



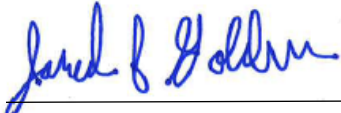
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator



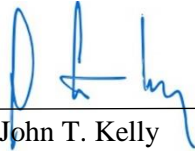
Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senator



Jared F. Golden
Member of Congress



Chellie M. Pingree
Member of Congress



John T. Kelly
Member of Congress



Steven M. Palazzo
Member of Congress