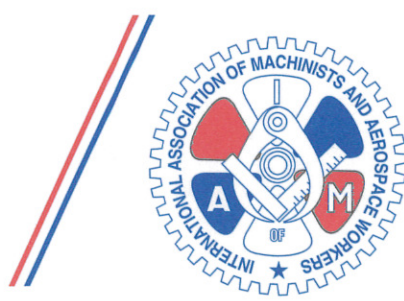


**International  
Association of  
Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers**



9000 Machinists Place  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772-2687

Area Code 301  
967-4500



OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

March 6, 2020

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, the largest defense union in the United States, I am writing to urge you to sign on to an important, bipartisan letter in support of the Virginia-class and the Columbia-class submarine programs (see attached). The letter, led by Representatives Joe Courtney (D-CT), Rob Wittman (R-VA) and Jim Langevin (D-RI), asks the Chair and Ranking Member of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee to continue their support for a two-per-year build rate for the Virginia-class submarine and to continue their commitment to the Columbia-class submarine program as they develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Defense appropriations bill.

Our nation's submarine fleet remains one of our most important strategic defense assets, but the dwindling fleet is in need of replenishment. Continued, unwavering support of the Virginia-class program is essential to our national security and to ensuring the United States maintains its dominance at sea. In addition, the program provides for thousands of high-skilled Machinists Union jobs, and consistent support of the program is vital to maintaining this workforce and a strong domestic industrial base. For these reasons, Congress has consistently supported a two-per-year build rate for Virginia-class submarines. We are deeply concerned with the Administration's FY21 budget proposal which reduces funding for the program and proposes to purchase only one Virginia-class submarine in FY21. **The attached letter urges support for maintaining a two-per-year build rate and fully funding a second Virginia-class submarine in FY 2021.**

Conversely, the Administration's FY2021 budget proposes an appropriate level of funding for the Columbia-class submarine program. This program also provides for thousands of high-skilled Machinists Union jobs and is vital to maintaining the integrity of our domestic industrial base. **The attached letter urges support for the President's FY2021 budget request for the Columbia-class submarine program.**

**On behalf of the thousands of Machinists Union members proudly working in the shipbuilding industry across the United States, I urge you to sign on to this important bipartisan letter.** To sign on, please contact Sam Menchel in Congressman Courtney's office at [sam.menchel@mail.house.gov](mailto:sam.menchel@mail.house.gov).

For more information, please contact IAM Legislative Director Hasan Solomon at (301) 967-4575 or [hsolomon@iamaw.org](mailto:hsolomon@iamaw.org).

Thank you,

Robert Martinez, Jr.  
International President

Dear Colleague,

As co-chairs of the Congressional Submarine Caucus, we ask you to join us in urging strong support for our nation's critical submarine programs in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Defense appropriations bill.

Submarines and our undersea capabilities remain one of nation's most distinct national security advantages. However, in the coming decade the attack submarine force will see a decline from 52 submarines today to 42 in 2024 – a nearly 20% reduction. This decrease will occur while other nations like China and Russia are expanding their undersea capabilities, and our combatant commanders have sounded the alarm that their submarine mission needs are only half-met.

To address this challenge and provide stability for the industrial base, Congress has consistently supported the two-a-year build rate for the Virginia-class submarines. However, the President's budget request deviates from that plan and funds only one new attack submarine in 2021. This is despite the fact that Congress has already allocated over \$1.1 billion for a second 2021 submarine, and specifically provided direction and \$200 million last year to support a second submarine in FY 2021. **To this end, our letter requests support for sustaining the two-a-year build rate and fully funding a second submarine in FY 2021.**

The President's budget also fully funds the first year of major construction for the Columbia class submarine, the replacement for our aging fleet of Ohio-class SSBNs. This program remains central to our nation's strategic deterrent capabilities and is the Department of Defense's top national security acquisition priorities. **Our letter requests full support for the President's budget request for the Columbia class submarine program in FY 2021.**

To join this letter, please follow this link to fill in the signature form. Please contact Sam Menchel on Rep. Courtney's staff at [Sam.Menchel@mail.house.gov](mailto:Sam.Menchel@mail.house.gov) if you have any questions or encounter any issues. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

JOE COURTNEY  
Member of Congress

JIM LANGEVIN  
Member of Congress

ROB WITTMAN  
Member of Congress

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February XX, 2020

The Honorable Peter Visclosky  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Defense  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-405, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Defense  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Visclosky and Ranking Member Calvert:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Defense appropriations bill, we request your strong bipartisan support for the Virginia-class attack submarine and the Columbia-class sea-based deterrence submarine.

***Virginia-class Submarine***

We are deeply concerned with the proposal to procure just one Virginia-class submarine in the President's proposed FY 2021 budget. In recent years, Congress has heard consistent and alarming testimony about the growing capabilities and increased undersea activity of competitors like Russia and China. For example, just last month Vice Adm. Andrew "Woody" Lewis, commander of U.S. Second Fleet, noted that he is seeing an *"ever-increasing number of Russian submarines"* deploying to the Atlantic. Admiral Phillip Davidson, commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, told Congress last March that *"My day-to-day [submarine] requirement is met by slightly over 50 percent of what I've asked for."*

Despite these challenges, attack submarine capabilities remain one of our most distinct national security advantages. We agree with Defense Secretary Mark Esper when he said that *"[w]e have to maintain that overmatch, and that means we have to continue to grow the fleet and build capabilities into each version."*

Unfortunately, our attack submarine fleet is on track to decline to just 42 boats in 2027 – a nearly 20 percent reduction from current levels. In fact under current plans, the attack submarine force will face the deepest and most prolonged shortfall below requirements of any ship type over the next thirty years. As Admiral John Richardson, then-Chief of Naval Operations, told Congress last year, *"with respect to our greatest gap between the war fighting requirement and current inventory, there's no greater need than the attack submarine fleet...it's a wide gap and it's getting wider. So, every single submarine counts against closing that gap."*

This is why Congress has strongly supported and defended the consistent two-a-year build rate of Virginia-class attack submarines. Congress has already allocated more than \$1.1 billion to support a second FY 2021 submarine, including \$200 million specifically authorized and appropriated last year on a bipartisan basis to support sustainment of the two-a-year build rate in FY 2021. Further, an estimated 300 contracts have already been awarded to suppliers in the nation-wide industrial base in support of the submarine that was removed from the President's FY 2021 budget.

The proposal to request one attack submarine is contrary to the National Defense Strategy, the needs of our combatant commanders, and a decade of Congressional action in support of a steady two-a-year build rate to support our national security and ensure stability in the industrial base. Of note, the Navy recently ranked the restoration of the second 2021 Virginia-class submarine as its top unfunded requirement.

**To that end, we respectfully request your strong support for two Virginia-class submarines in FY 2021.**

### *Columbia-class Submarine*

The replacement for the Ohio-class submarine program, which has faithfully deterred our adversaries for over 40 years, represents a critical leg of our nation's nuclear triad and will carry nearly 70 percent of the nation's deployed nuclear arsenal. This program is the Navy's number one acquisition priority and must maintain its aggressive schedule to continue to meet the nation's strategic deterrence goals. The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review reaffirmed the central role that our sea-based deterrent will play in the coming decades.

The President's FY 2021 budget requests funding to begin construction of the first boat of our Navy's Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine program. This milestone represents the beginning of a once-in-a-generation commitment to recapitalizing our sea-based strategic deterrent. Congress has provided strong support for the Columbia-class program in recent years, including innovative new authorities to ensure the efficient use of taxpayer dollars and stability in the industrial base. As a result, at the start of construction the Columbia-class program will have reached over 80 percent design completion, compared to just two percent at the same stage of the Ohio-class program.

Strong Congressional support for the program at this milestone is critical to ensuring that the Navy, the shipbuilders, and the industrial base have the support they need to ensure success in this central part of our nation's strategic deterrence.

**To this end, we urge your full support for the President's budget request for the Columbia-class program.**

Sincerely,