

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 11, 2013

The Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350

Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert
Chief of Naval Operations
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Secretary Mabus and Admiral Greenert,

We are writing today to express our deep concern over the Navy's proposal to cancel all third and fourth quarter surface ship maintenance availabilities as of February 15, 2013. We respectfully request that the Navy delay the cancellation direction in order to provide Congress with an opportunity to resolve the ongoing budget impasse.

In a January 10, 2013 Memorandum entitled "Handling Budgetary Uncertainty in Fiscal Year 2013," Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter stated that "to the extent possible, any actions taken must be reversible at a later date" in order to "minimize harmful effects on our people and on operations and unit readiness."

As members of Congress with a keen interest in Navy readiness, we understand that cancelling maintenance for Navy ships is not a reversible action. As you are aware, the schedule for maintenance, training, and deployment is set well in advance and if a maintenance period is missed, it will have a domino effect on each successive availability.

Such action brings significant risks that can only be mitigated at greatly increased expense to the U.S. taxpayer. Mission-degrading repairs will not be accomplished before the ships enter their training and certification phase, which will carry over into their deployment phase. Other deferred repairs will erode the service-life expectancy of affected ships. We are particularly concerned with this consequence in light of the increased investments that the Congress and Navy have made in the fleet in recent years.

Modernization scheduled in FY13 to support missions in FY14 and beyond (such as Ballistic Missile Defense) will not be accomplished, placing future Combatant Commander Missions at risk. Planned FY13 Modernization equipment procurement will not be available for installation in FY16 and beyond, producing a legacy of combat mission degradation for years to come.

Private sector shipyards, which comprise the Navy's surface combatant fleet maintenance capability, will suffer lay-offs potentially numbering in the thousands. Productivity may not be fully recovered if and when maintenance funds are restored, impacting the quality and effectiveness of Navy Maintenance and Modernization.

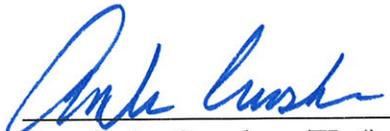
We recognize that you face a difficult situation given the current funding constraints. However, consistent with Secretary Carter's direction that planned cuts should be reversible, we respectfully request that the Navy delay the February 15 cancellation deadline as we work to resolve the FY13 funding crisis.

We stand ready to discuss this matter with you at your earliest convenience as the deadline for resolving this is at hand.

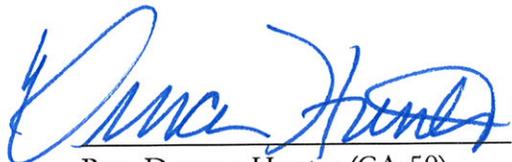
We appreciate your attention on this matter, and look forward to your response.

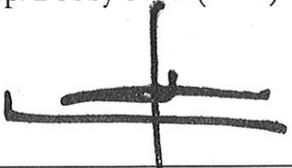
Sincerely,

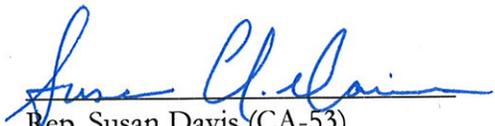

Rep. Scott Rigell (VA-2)


Rep. Ander Crenshaw (FL-4)

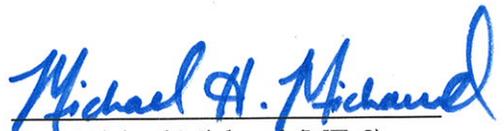

Rep. Bobby Scott (VA-3)


Rep. Duncan Hunter (CA-50)


Rep. Colleen Hanabusa (HI-01)


Rep. Susan Davis (CA-53)


Rep. Chellie Pingree (ME-1)


Rep. Michael Michaud (ME-2)


Rep. Scott Peters (CA-52)