



Jared Golden
Congress of the United States
2nd District of Maine

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Senator Roger Wicker
Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee
425 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Mike Rogers
Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
2469 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Jack Reed
Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services
Committee
728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Adam Smith
Ranking Member, House Armed Services
Committee
2264 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, Chairman Rogers, and Ranking Member Smith,

As the negotiations for the 2027 National Defense Authorizations Act (NDAA) continue, I strongly urge you to retain language enacted by the House to protect and strengthen domestic shipbuilding.

In July, the House passed an NDAA that included language specifically prohibiting efforts by some in the Pentagon to build ships or parts of ships overseas. That language was simple:

“None of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this act for fiscal year 2027 for the Department of the Navy may be obligated or expended to enter into a contract for the procurement of a battle force ship to be built [in] a foreign shipyard that is to be commissioned a United States Ship (USS) warship.”

I am disappointed that far less comprehensive language was included in the NDAA passed out of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), which would allow for the construction of certain support vessels commissioned and flagged as United States Naval Ships (USNS) in foreign shipyards.



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Because it leaves the door open for the construction of ships by foreign workers in foreign shipyards, I find the Senate's domestic shipbuilding provision inferior to the House version and urge you to restore the language approved by the House.

America's ability to sustain and rely on domestic shipbuilding is not just nice to have; It is a must-have. Wherever possible, American military spending should support Americans' jobs. Doing so is the best way to secure supply chains, ensure the United States reaps the innovation benefits of our manufacturing base, and protect information critical to our national security.

Sending a portion of our shipbuilding overseas also introduces uncertainty that could weaken our domestic shipbuilding industry and capacity at a time when the industry is already facing challenges as a result of fluctuations in federal demand.

Robust and stable maritime capacity requires a consistent, executable, multiyear domestic production strategy. However, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) examined Navy shipbuilding plans from fiscal years 2019 through 2025 and [found that significant year-to-year changes produced an unreliable signal of future shipbuilding demand](#). This unreliability wreaks havoc on the shipbuilding industry, making it harder for them to adequately predict demand and maintain the skilled, efficient workforce we need to build and maintain a fleet capable of meeting our national security goals.

The Pentagon has sent inconsistent demand signals to the industrial base. For example, the Navy's fiscal year 2019 plan projected the procurement of 11 ships in FY 2025. Our shipbuilders banked on that projection, but ultimately the FY 2025 budget requested only six ships. GAO also found that the Navy's use of multiple alternative procurement paths further reduced the stability of the demand communicated to private industry.

This uncertainty has continued across administrations. The [Biden administration's fiscal year 2025 budget requested](#) six battle-force ships. As a result, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [projected](#) that the fleet would decline to 283 ships in 2027 before beginning to grow. The Trump administration did not submit a fiscal year 2026 long-range shipbuilding plan or Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). [CBO concluded](#) that the absence of a fiscal year 2026 FYDP, together with the use of multiyear reconciliation funding, created uncertainty about the Department's future costs.



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The capacity of the American shipbuilding industrial base depends not only on total funding in a particular fiscal year, but also on the consistency and predictability of future demand. Shipyards and their suppliers make workforce, infrastructure, and capital-investment decisions over periods substantially longer than a single budget cycle.

Ensuring stable, adequate demand for Battle Force Ships to be constructed in domestic yards is not just critical to the goals of consistency and predictability, it protects proprietary ship construction, sensitive and strategic design features, and, most importantly, protects against overreliance on foreign entities in the event of conflict on the world stage.

As both SASC and HASC leaders evaluate final language for the 2027 NDAA, I respectfully request that final language retains the House-passed language prohibiting any appropriations authorized by the Act being used to construct Battle Force Ships in foreign yards.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Jared Golden
Member of Congress