



# SUBMARINE INDUSTRIAL BASE COUNCIL

## VIRGINIA CLASS ATTACK SUBMARINE PROGRAM

### Maintain the Two Virginia Class Submarine Annual Build Rate

The U.S. currently has 50 nuclear-powered fast attack submarines (SSNs), including 19 Virginia Class submarines. Over the past decade, Navy and Defense Department leaders have consistently articulated a need for more fast attack submarines. Both the recent Future Naval Force Study and FY22 Shipbuilding Plan call for at least 72 fast attack submarines by 2045. In order to counter rapidly-evolving threats from near-peer rivals, it is critical to maintain at least a 2 submarine-per-year build rate for the Virginia Class program.

#### The Need for More Submarines

- *"We need more attack submarines, frankly."*—HASC, February 26, 2020, Mark Esper, Former Secretary of Defense
- *"If you asked me, if I could give you another ship today, what would it be? It would be a VIRGINIA class submarine."*—HASC, February 27, 2020, Admiral Michael Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations
- *"If we do nothing else we should invest in SSNs, due to the lethality they can bring from under the sea and the survivability they have. They are my first priority when thinking of the conventional side of Battle Force 2045."*—At CSBA, October 6, 2020, Mark Esper, Former Secretary of Defense

#### We Must Protect the Submarine Industrial Base

- The industrial base is fragile, having lost thousands of submarine suppliers since the Cold War. Today, 2,708 first-tier suppliers across nearly all 50 states provide thousands of high-skill, high-wage manufacturing jobs at shipyards and submarine supplier companies.

Virginia Class submarines are purchased in Blocks for efficiency and to help with industrial base stability. Both Block IV and Block V boats are currently under construction. The Virginia program achieved an impressive milestone by delivering its first Block IV submarine in the Spring of 2020—during the shutdown of the majority of the U.S. in the beginning of the pandemic. Deemed essential, the submarine shipyards and supply base safely stayed operational in order to get this new ship, with new capability, delivered to the fleet. This boat also received some of the highest quality scores ever from the Navy for a new construction submarine.

The Block V contract was awarded in December of 2019 and construction of these submarines is in full swing. The Virginia Payload Module (VPM), a cost-effective way to preserve the U.S. critical strike capacity, will be introduced on the second submarine in Block V, and will be included on all follow-on submarines in the Block. Currently, nuclear-powered fast attack submarines (SSNs) and guided missile submarines (SSGNs) provide this capability using Tomahawk cruise missiles. When the last SSGN retires in 2028, the U.S. will lose 60 percent of its undersea strike capacity. VPM mitigates this loss of strike capability by adding 28 additional launch canisters per Virginia Class submarine. Additionally, Block V submarines include specific upgrades to address known threats from Russia and China, both of which have invested heavily in submarine technology and capability in recent years.

Further enhancements on current and future blocks include subsea warfare specific capabilities, Special Operation Forces (SOF) Reconstitution, the integration of Undersea Dominance payloads, and other enhancements, all of which solidify the centrality of the submarine within the arsenal of the nation.

## Support the President's Budget Request\*

Navy funding of \$6.651 Billion (\$318M in RDT&E, \$6.333B in SCN) to Fund Two Virginia Class Submarines in FY22 and Maintain the Two-Per-Year Build Rate

\*Funding amounts are based on PB21 data