



THE SUBMARINE INDUSTRIAL BASE COUNCIL

March 8, 2023

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the Submarine Industrial Base Council, we want to thank you for recognizing the vital role submarines play in our national defense. The submarine industrial base comprises thousands of companies in nearly all 50 states and employs tens of thousands of highly skilled American workers. We request your support of the President's Budget for three critical submarine program issues:

Navy funding for Columbia Class RDT&E, SCN, and DOE funding in FY24 to continue Columbia Class development and construction

Columbia Class ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) program is the Defense Department's #1 priority. SSBNs carry ~70% of the U.S. strategic arsenal as the most survivable leg of the nuclear triad. Construction of the first Columbia Class submarine officially began in October 2020 with the most mature submarine design in our Navy's shipbuilding history. It is critical to maintain full funding for the program to reduce the risk of construction delays and prevent a gap in U.S. deterrent capabilities when the Ohio Class SSBNs begin to retire. The first Columbia Class SSBN is scheduled to be delivered to the Navy in 2027 to make its first strategic deterrent patrol in 2030, providing strategic deterrence into the 2080s.

Navy funding for Virginia Class RDT&E and SCN in FY24 to maintain the two-attack submarine (SSN) annual build rate

The U.S. currently has 49 fast attack submarines (SSNs) including 21 Virginia Class SSNs. The April 2022 Long Range Navy Shipbuilding Plan calls for a Future Fleet Architecture range of 58–70 fast attack submarines by 2052, which would include a composition of traditional Virginia platforms, in addition to Virginia Payload Module (VPM) and Subsea and Seabed Warfare (SSW) capable hulls. The sustained procurement of at least two Virginia Class submarines per year is essential for the Navy to maintain undersea dominance.

Navy funding for Columbia Class SCN and Defense-Wide RDTE funding in FY24 to revitalize the nation's submarine workforce and manufacturing capacity

More than two decades of low-rate submarine production has resulted in a fragile industrial base with many single or sole source suppliers. Congressional support of workforce and supplier development funding cannot be overstated, as this provides critical support to continue to build up the submarine enterprise. To enable the construction of one COLUMBIA and two VIRGINIA class submarines per year, it is estimated the submarine industrial base will need to hire 100,000 employees over the next decade to meet this demand. Thus, workforce development funding could not be more critical for the continued health and stability of submarine manufacturing. In 2024, requested funding will be used to increase the capacity and capability of suppliers, as well as to attract, train and retain personnel supporting submarine manufacturing across the nation.

The Submarine Industrial Base Council and its members are proud of their contribution to our nation's security and economy. With your help, we can continue to design and build the world's best nuclear-powered submarines that keep America safe today and tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Steven Dobos
Co-Chair, SIBC

Patricia Herschkowitz
Co-Chair, SIBC

Keith Macdowall
Co-Chair, SIBC