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TO: Submarine Suppliers

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Welcome to the Submarine Industrial Base Council's (SIBC) 34th annual Supplier Days. Your participation in Supplier Days and SIBC programs throughout the year helps ensure that our elected representatives understand the importance and value of submarines and the submarine industrial base. With budget discussions underway, we must seize this opportunity to engage members of Congress on the importance of submarines and the submarine industrial base with veteran members and newcomers.

It is crucial that every member of Congress understands the importance of our nation's submarine programs and that the requests outlined below support both national and economic security. The submarine industrial base is a unique national asset, providing the world's finest submarines and tens of thousands of high-quality, high-skill, high-wage jobs across the country. For FY26, we are not including exact funding amounts in our requests for the VCS and CLB because the FY26 President's budget has not yet been released.

Columbia Class Submarine Program—Provide funding for One Columbia Class Submarine in FY26

The Columbia Class ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) is the most advanced deterrent platform ever produced by the United States of America. It remains the #1 national security priority for the Department of Defense. This program will deliver a minimum of 12 submarines into the fleet, replacing the current Ohio Class fleet hulls and providing persistent strategic deterrence into the 2080s. In October 2020, construction began on the USS DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (SSBN826), the lead hull of the class, which is currently 53% complete. Progress continues in earnest on the USS WISCONSIN (SSBN827), the second hull of the class, which is currently 14% complete.

Virginia Class Attack Submarine Program—Provide Funding for Two Virginia Class Submarines in FY26

The Virginia Class attack submarine remains the most agile, versatile, and adaptable platform within the United States undersea warfare inventory, able to prosecute a broad range of mission sets and evolve throughout the life of the program to pace future threats. The need for Virginia Class submarines has never been more pronounced. For example, the Navy's latest Long Range Navy Shipbuilding Plan, informed by the 2023 Battle Force Ship Assessment, calls for 66 fast-attack submarines by 2053. However, the U.S. currently has only 52 fast-attack submarines, including 24 Virginia Class submarines. By contrast, the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) estimates that the Chinese shipbuilding capability is over 200 times that of the U.S., marking China as the pacing global threat for ship and submarine production.

After a rapid reduction in demand following the end of the Cold War and subsequent 20 years of low-rate production, the nuclear shipbuilding industrial base is struggling to rapidly ramp production rates to meet critical fleet needs. Recent historically high inflation, the generational change in workforce demographics, and below-market wages place the industry at a critical juncture as the prime nuclear shipyards and the Navy work towards the acquisition of the next 17 nuclear submarines (two Block V Virginia Class, ten Block VI Virginia Class, and five Columbia Class ballistic missile submarines). Steady funding and stable construction profiles for the Virginia Class Submarine are critical while the industrial base works to overcome these challenges.

Support Robust Funding to Revitalize the Nation's Submarine Workforce and Manufacturing Capacity

The strength of the American submarine enterprise is directly tied to the strength of the thousands of submarine suppliers, spread from coast to coast, working daily to ensure continued US dominance of the undersea domain. Our nation must increase submarine construction capacity to support the demand for the Columbia and Virginia submarine programs, yet several decades of low-rate production resulted in thousands of suppliers leaving the industry, increased reliance on single sources, aging facilities with limited ability to make investments, and Shipbuilder in-sourcing to maintain critical skills. Capacity and workforce challenges are amplified by the continued decline of the US manufacturing sector. Now, the post-pandemic environment with the fact-of-life changes, including nationwide inflation, supply chain disruptions, and generational workforce changes, continue to add to the challenges the industry faces.

Congressionally-supported workforce and supplier development funding has begun to revitalize the submarine enterprise and infuse much-needed resiliency within domestic shipbuilding. The Submarine Industrial Base (SIB), now comprised of 2,646 first-tier suppliers across 48 states, must continue to expand to meet the demands of the submarine enterprise. This expansion, in turn, will continue to support tens of thousands of high-skill, high-wage manufacturing jobs across the country and enable sustained excellence in domestic capability and US undersea dominance. The significance of these historic investments within the SIB cannot be overstated, and they remain a lifeline for the tens of thousands of dedicated SIB employees and their essential product lines that are foundational to our national defense.

Thank you again for being a vital part of this year's Supplier Days. Your time, dedication, and efforts have a meaningful impact, and we deeply appreciate your commitment to this important cause.