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Navy Ship Names: Background for Congress

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Committees of Congress

Summary

Names for Navy ships traditionally have been chosen and announced by the Secretary of the Navy, under the direction of the President and in accordance with rules prescribed by Congress. Rules for giving certain types of names to certain types of Navy ships have evolved over time. There have been exceptions to the Navy's ship-naming rules, particularly for the purpose of naming a ship for a person when the rule for that type of ship would have called for it to be named for something else. Some observers have perceived a breakdown in, or corruption of, the rules for naming Navy ships. On July 13, 2012, the Navy submitted to Congress a 73-page report on the Navy's policies and practices for naming ships.

For ship types now being procured for the Navy, or recently procured for the Navy, naming rules can be summarized as follows:

- The first **Ohio replacement ballistic missile submarine (SSBN-826)** has been named *Columbia* in honor of the District of Columbia, but the Navy has not stated what the naming rule for these ships will be.
- **Virginia (SSN-774) class attack submarines** are being named for states.
- **Aircraft carriers** are generally named for past U.S. Presidents. Of the past 14, 10 were named for past U.S. Presidents, and 2 for Members of Congress.
- **Destroyers** are being named for deceased members of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, including Secretaries of the Navy.
- The Navy has not yet announced a naming rule for its planned new class of **FFG(X) frigates**, the first of which the Navy wants to procure in FY2021. Previous classes of U.S. Navy frigates, like Navy destroyers, were generally named for naval leaders and heroes.
- **Littoral Combat Ships (LCSs)** are being named for regionally important U.S. cities and communities.
- **Amphibious assault ships** are being named for important battles in which U.S. Marines played a prominent part, and for famous earlier U.S. Navy ships that were not named for battles.
- **San Antonio (LPD-17) class amphibious ships** are being named for major U.S. cities and communities, and cities and communities attacked on September 11, 2001.
- **John Lewis (TAO-205) class oilers** are being named for people who fought for civil rights and human rights.
- **Expeditionary Fast Transports (EPFs)** are being named for small U.S. cities.
- **Expeditionary Transport Docks (ESDs) and Expeditionary Sea Bases (ESBs)** are being named for famous names or places of historical significance to U.S. Marines.
- **Navajo (TATS-6) class towing, salvage, and rescue ships** are being named for prominent Native Americans or Native American tribes.

Since 1974, at least 21 U.S. military ships have been named for persons who were living at the time the name was announced. The most recent instance occurred on May 6, 2019, when the Navy announced that it was naming the destroyer DDG-51 for former Senator Sam Nunn.

Members of the public are sometimes interested in having Navy ships named for their own states or cities, for older U.S. Navy ships (particularly those on which they or their relatives served), for battles in which they or their relatives participated, or for people they admire.

Congress has long maintained an interest in how Navy ships are named, and has influenced the naming of certain Navy ships. The Navy suggests that congressional offices wishing to express support for proposals to name a Navy ship for a specific person, place, or thing contact the office of the Secretary of the Navy to make their support known. Congress may also pass legislation relating to ship names. Measures passed by Congress in recent years regarding Navy ship names have all been sense-of-the-Congress provisions.

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Background

Navy's Authority and Process for Naming Ships

Authority for Naming Ships

Names for Navy ships traditionally have been chosen and announced by the Secretary of the Navy, under the direction of the President and in accordance with rules prescribed by Congress. For most of the 19th century, U.S. law included language explicitly assigning the Secretary of the Navy the task of naming new Navy ships.[1] The reference to the Secretary of the Navy disappeared from the U.S. Code in 1925.[2] The code today (10 U.S.C. §8662) is silent on the issue of who has the authority to name new Navy ships,[3] but the Secretary of the Navy arguably retains implicit authority, given the location of Section 8662 in subtitle C of Title 10, which covers the Navy and Marine Corps.

Process for Selecting Names

In discussing its name-selection process, the Naval History and Heritage Command—the Navy's in-house office of professional historians—cites the above-mentioned laws and states the following:

> As with many other things, the procedures and practices involved in Navy ship naming are as much, if not more, products of evolution and tradition than of legislation. As we have seen, the names for new ships are personally decided by the Secretary of the Navy. The

[1] A law approved in 1819 (Res. of March 3, 1819, §1, 3 Stat. 538, No. 7) stated "That all of the ships of the navy of the United States, now building, or hereafter to be built, shall be named by the Secretary of the Navy, under the direction of the President of the United States" in accordance with rules specifying that ships of the first class were to be named after states of the Union, and second and third class ships were to be named, respectively, after rivers and principal cities and towns. A law approved in 1858 (Act of June 12, 1858, c. 153, §5, 11 Stat. 319) provided a similar rule for "steamships of the navy," except that third-class vessels (those with fewer than twenty guns) were to be named by the Secretary of the Navy as the President may direct, taking care that no two vessels in the Navy shall bear the same name." §1531 of the Revised Statutes of 1873-1874, citing the 1819 and 1858 laws, states the following: "The vessels of the Navy shall be named by the Secretary of the Navy, under the direction of the President" in accordance with rules similar to those above, varying slightly depending on whether the vessel was a sailing ship or a steamship. In 1898, Congress passed a law (Act of May 4, 1898, c. 234, 30 Stat. 390 [appropriations for the naval services]) prescribing rules for the naming of "first-class battle ships and monitors," which specified that these were to be named after States and "shall not be named for any city, place, or persons until the names of the States, shall have been exhausted." The provision did not explicitly state whose duty it would be to assign names to vessels. Congress repealed this provision in 1908 as it pertained to monitors, permitting those vessels to be named "as the President may direct." (Act of May 13, 1908, c. 166, 35 Stat. 159.)

[2] The reference to the Secretary of the Navy found in §1531 of the Revised Statutes of 1873-1874 (see previous footnote) is absent from the U.S. Code of 1925, which covers Navy vessel names in Title 34, §461-463.

[3] 10 U.S.C. §8662 was previously numbered as 10 U.S.C. §7292. It was renumbered as 10 U.S.C. §7292 by Section 807(d)(2) of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (H.R. 5515/P.L. 115-232 of August 13, 2018). (Section 807 of P.L. 115-232 directed the renumbering of various sections of Title 10 relating to the Navy and Marine Corps. Sections 806 and 808 did the same for sections of Title 10 relating to the Air Force and Army, respectively.) Prior to that, 34 U.S.C. §461-463 of the 1925 U.S. Code (see previous footnote) had been recodified as 10 U.S.C. §7292. 10 U.S.C. §8662 states that battleships "shall be named for a State. However, if the names of all the States are in use, a battleship may be named for a city, place, or person" (§8662(b)). It specifically authorizes the Secretary of the Navy to "change the name of any vessel bought for the Navy" (§8662(c)), but does not explicitly assign responsibility for ensuring that no two vessels have the same name (§8662(a)), or for naming battleships (§8662(b)).

> Secretary can rely on many sources to help him reach his decisions. Each year, the Navy History and Heritage Command (NHHC) compiles primary and alternate ship name recommendations and forwards these to the Chief of Naval Operations by way of the chain of command. These recommendations are the result of research into the history of the Navy and by suggestions submitted by service members, Navy veterans, and the public. Ship name source records at NHHC reflect the wide variety of name sources that have been used in the past, particularly since World War I. Ship name recommendations are conditioned by such factors as the name categories for ship types now being built, as approved by the Secretary of the Navy; the distribution of geographic names of ships of the fleet; names borne by previous ships that distinguished themselves in service; names recommended by individuals and groups; and names of naval leaders, national figures, and deceased members of the Navy and Marine Corps who have been honored for heroism in war or for extraordinary achievement in peace.
>
> In its final form, after consideration at the various levels of command, the Chief of Naval Operations signs the memorandum recommending names for the current year's building program and sends it to the Secretary of the Navy. The Secretary considers these nominations, along with others he receives, as well as his own thoughts in this matter. At appropriate times, he selects names for specific ships and announces them.
>
> While there is no set time for assigning a name, it is customarily done before the ship is christened. The ship's sponsor─the person who will christen the ship─is also selected and invited by the Secretary. In the case of ships named for individuals, an effort is made to identify the eldest living direct female descendant of that individual to perform the role of ship's sponsor. For ships with other name sources, it is customary to honor the wives of senior naval officers or public officials.[4]

A July 2012 Navy report to Congress on the Navy's policies and practices for naming ships (see next section) states the following:

> Once a type/class naming convention [i.e., a general rule or guideline for how ships of a certain type or class are to be named] is established, Secretaries can rely on many sources to help in the final selection of a ship name. For example, sitting Secretaries can solicit ideas and recommendations from either the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) or the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), or both. They can also task the Naval Heritage and History Command to compile primary and alternate ship name recommendations that are the result of research into the history of the Navy's battle force or particular ship names. Secretaries also routinely receive formal suggestions for ship names from concerned citizens, active and retired service members, or members of Congress. Finally, Congress can enact provisions in Public Law that express the sense of the entire body about new ship naming conventions or specific ship names. Regardless of the origin of the recommendations, however, the final selection of a ship's name is the Secretary's to make, informed and guided by his own thoughts, counsel, and preferences. At the appropriate time—normally sometime after the ship has been either authorized or appropriated by Congress and before its keel laying or christening—the Secretary records his decision with a formal naming announcement.[5]

[4] Naval History and Heritage Command, "The Evolution of Ship Naming in the U.S. Navy," accessed April 30, 2019, at https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/browse-by-topic/heritage/customs-and-traditions0/ship-naming/the-evolution-of-ship-naming-in-the-u-s—navy.html.

[5] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 3.

July 2012 Navy Report to Congress

On July 13, 2012, the Navy submitted to Congress a 73-page report on the Navy's policies and practices for naming ships.[6] The report was submitted in response to Section 1014 of the FY2012 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 1540/P.L. 112-81 of December 31, 2011). The executive summary of the Navy's report is reprinted here as **Appendix A**.[7]

Overview of Naming Rules for Ship Types

Evolution Over Time

Rules for giving certain types of names to certain types of Navy ships have evolved over time. Attack submarines, for example, were once named for fish, then later for cities, and most recently for states, while cruisers were once named for cities, then later for states,[8] and most recently for battles. State names, to cite another example, were given to battleships, then later to nuclear-powered cruisers and ballistic missile submarines, and are now being given to attack submarines.

The Naval History and Heritage Command states the following: "How will the Navy name its ships in the future? It seems safe to say that the evolutionary process of the past will continue; as the fleet itself changes, so will the names given to its ships. It seems equally safe, however, to say that future decisions in this area will continue to demonstrate regard for the rich history and valued traditions of the United States Navy."[9] The July 2012 Navy report to Congress states that "US Navy ship-naming policies, practices, and 'traditions' are not fixed; they evolve constantly over time."[10] The report also states that "Just as [ship] type naming conventions change over time to accommodate technological change as well as choices made by Secretaries, they also change over time as every Secretary makes their own interpretation of the original naming convention."[11]

Exceptions

There have been numerous exceptions to the Navy's ship-naming rules, particularly for the purpose of naming a ship for a person when the rule for that type of ship would have called for it to be named for something else.[12] The July 2012 report to Congress cites exceptions to ship naming rules dating back to the earliest days of the republic, and states that "a Secretary's

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[6] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, 73 pp. As of October 16, 2019, the report was posted at https://www.history.navy.mil/content/dam/nhhc/browse-by-topic/heritage/pdf/Shipnamingreport.pdf.

[7] For an article providing a critical perspective on the Navy's report, see Norman Polmar, "Report on Ship Naming Falls Short," *Seapower*, October 2012: 6-7.

[8] Cruisers named for states were nuclear-powered cruisers.

[9] Naval History and Heritage Command, "The Evolution of Ship Naming in the U.S. Navy," accessed April 30, 2019, at https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/browse-by-topic/heritage/customs-and-traditions0/ship-naming/the-evolution-of-ship-naming-in-the-u-s—navy.html.

[10] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 10.

[11] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 25.

[12] Ohio (SSBN-726) class ballistic missile submarines, for example, were named for states, but one (SSBN-730) was named for Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson of Washington, who died in office in 1983. Los Angeles (SSN-688) class attack submarines were named for cities, but one (SSN-709) was named for Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, who served for many years as director of the Navy's nuclear propulsion program. Ticonderoga (CG-47) class cruisers were named for battles, but one (CG-51) was named for Thomas S. Gates, a former Secretary of the Navy and Secretary of Defense.

discretion to make exceptions to ship-naming conventions is one of the Navy's oldest ship-naming traditions."[13] The report argues that exceptions made for the purpose of naming ships for Presidents or Members of Congress have occurred frequently enough that, rather than being exceptions, they constitute a "special cross-type naming convention" for Presidents and Members of Congress.[14] This CRS report continues to note, as exceptions to basic class naming rules, instances where ships other than aircraft carriers have been named for Presidents or Members of Congress.

Some observers have perceived a breakdown in, or corruption of, the rules for naming Navy ships.[15] Such observers might cite, for example, the three-ship Seawolf (SSN-21) class of attack submarines—*Seawolf* (SSN-21), *Connecticut* (SSN-22), and *Jimmy Carter* (SSN-23)—which were named for a fish, a state, and a President, respectively, reflecting no apparent class naming rule.[16] The July 2012 Navy report to Congress states the following: "Current ship naming policies and practices fall well within the historic spectrum of policies and practices for naming vessels of the Navy, and are altogether consistent with ship naming customs and traditions."[17]

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[13] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 7.

[14] The report states that

> the decision of the [Navy's 1969] Riera Panel [on Navy ship names] to remove members of Congress from the destroyer naming convention resulted in a now four-decade old, *bipartisan* practice of honoring members of Congress with long records of support to the US military with ships names selected and spread across a variety of ship types and classes. Orthodox Traditionalists decry this development as an unwarranted intrusion of "politics" in Navy ship naming practice. But this is a selective interpretation of the historical record. Secretaries of the Navy have been naming ships for members of Congress *for nearly a century* in order to honor those extraordinary elected leaders who have helped to make the Navy-Marine Corps Team the most powerful naval force in history.
>
> Like many Pragmatic Secretaries of the Navy before him, [then-]Secretary [of the Navy Ray] Mabus endorses and subscribes to this special naming convention....
>
> Objections to [then-]Secretary Mabus's decision to name a ship in honor of Congressman Murtha generally fall into one of four categories. The first are Orthodox Traditionalists who naturally complain that his selection represents a corruption of the LPD 17 naming convention. However, as outlined above, the choice is perfectly consistent with the special cross-type naming convention that honors Legislative Branch members who have been closely identified with military and naval affairs, which has been endorsed by Secretaries from both parties and Congress....
>
> In summary, while USS John P. Murtha represents an exception to the *established* LPD 17 [amphibious ship] class naming convention, it is completely consistent with the *special* cross-type naming convention for honoring famous American elected leaders, including both Presidents and members of Congress with records of long-term service and support to the US armed forces.
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> (Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 28-30. Italics as in original. See also pp. 37, 41, 42, 44, 47, 68, and 73.)

[15] See, for example, Donald R. Bouchoux, "The Name Game," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, March 2000: 110-111; Norman Polmar, "Misnaming Aircraft Carriers," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, September 2006: 30-31; Norman Polmar, "Misnaming Navy Ships (Again)," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, February 2009: 89; and Norman Polmar, "There's a Lot in a Name," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2012: 88-89; Carl Forsling, "A Plan To Fix The Navy's Broken Ship Naming System," *Task and Purpose*, May 6, 2015.

[16] See, for example, Norman Polmar, "There's a Lot in a Name," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2012: 88-89, which characterizes the naming of the Seawolf class as a "fiasco." For the Navy's discussion of the Seawolf class names, see Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 46-47.

[17] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*,

Rules for Ship Types Now Being Procured or Recently Procured

For ship types now being procured for the Navy, or recently procured for the Navy, naming rules (and exceptions thereto) are summarized below. The July 2012 Navy report to Congress discusses current naming rules (and exceptions thereto) at length.

Ballistic Missile Submarines (SSBNs)

On December 14, 2016, the Navy named the first of its 12 planned next-generation ballistic missile submarines *Columbia* (SSBN-826), in honor of the District of Columbia.[18] The 12 planned boats are consequently now referred to as *Columbia*-class or SSBN-826 class boats.[19] The Navy has not stated what the naming rule for these ships will be. Given the selection of *Columbia* as the name of the lead ship, possibilities for the naming rule include (but are not necessarily limited to) cities, capital cities, or states and federal districts and territories. It is also possible that the name *Columbia* will turn out to be an exception to the naming rule for the class.

The current USS *Columbia* (SSN-771)—a Los Angeles (SSN-688) class attack submarine that was named for Columbia, SC; Columbia, IL; and Columbia, MO[20]—entered service in 1995 and will reach the end of its 33-year expected service life in 2028, at about the time that construction of SSBN-826 is scheduled to be completed. If the service life of SSN-771 is extended for several years, it would remain in service after the commissioning of SSBN-826. This would create an issue to be resolved, since 10 U.S.C. §8662(a) states, "Not more than one vessel of the Navy may have the same name." One possible step for resolving such an issue would be to change the name of SSBN-826 to something else, such as *District of Columbia*—a step that could be viewed as somewhat similar to the below-discussed instance in which the name of the Los Angles-class submarine SSN-705 was changed from *Corpus Christi* to *City of Corpus Christi* (see "Congressional Responses to Announced Navy Ship-Naming Decisions" below).

Attack Submarines (SSNs)

Virginia (SSN-774) class attack submarines[21] are being named for states. An exception occurred on January 8, 2009, when then-Secretary of the Navy Donald Winter announced that SSN-785 would be named for former Senator John Warner.[22] Another exception occurred on January 9,

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undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. iii.

[18] "Secretary of the Navy Names Three Vessels," DOD Press Release NR-444-16, December 14, 2016. See also Megan Eckstein, "SECNAV Mabus to Officially Designate First ORP [Ohio Replacement Program] Boat USS Columbia (SSBN-826)," *USNI News*, December 13, 2016. The Navy's intent to name the first Ohio replacement boat Columbia was first reported in July 2016; see Sam LaGrone, "Navy Ohio Replacement Sub Class to Be Named for D.C.," *USNI News*, July 28, 2016; Jacqueline Klimas, "Navy's Next Sub Class to Be Named after D.C.," *Washington Examiner*, July 29, 2016; "Document: Notice to Congress on 8 Proposed Navy Ship Names," *USNI News*, August 3, 2016.

[19] For more on the *Columbia*-class program, see CRS Report R41129, *Navy Columbia (SSBN-826) Class Ballistic Missile Submarine Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[20] "Columbia VIII (SSN-771), 1995–," *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, accessed December 22, 2016, at https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs/c/columbia-viii—ssn-771-.html.

[21] For more on the Virginia-class program, see CRS Report RL32418, *Navy Virginia (SSN-774) Class Attack Submarine Procurement: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[22] DOD News Release No. 016-09, "Navy Names Virginia Class Submarine USS John Warner," January 8, 2009. Warner served as a sailor in World War II, as a Marine in the Korean War, as Under Secretary of the Navy in 1969-1972, and as Secretary of the Navy in 1972-1974. Warner served as a Senator from January 2, 1979, to January 3, 2009. He was a longtime Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and was for several years the chairman of that committee. Winter's January 8, 2009, announcement assigned a name to SSN-785 11 months before the ship was

2014, when then-Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that SSN-795, the second of the two Virginia-class boats procured in FY2015, would be named for Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, who served for many years as director of the Navy's nuclear propulsion program.[23]

As of October 16, 2019, the Navy has announced names for all Virginia-class boats through SSN-801, the second of two Virginia-class boats procured in FY2018.

A total of 30 Virginia-class boats have been procured through FY2019, of which 26 have been named for states. (Two were named for people and the two procured in FY2019 have not yet been named.) The Navy's shipbuilding plan calls for procuring three additional Virginia-class boats in FY2020 and two per year FY2021 and subsequent years.[24] The 26 state-named Virginia-class boats procured through FY2018, together with the additional Virginia-class boats planned for procurement in FY2020 and subsequent years and the 17 existing state-named Ohio (SSBN-726) class SSBNs and cruise missile submarine (SSGNs),[25] could make for a total of more than 50 boats starting around FY2022. Thus, starting around FY2022, the Navy might run out of state names for Virginia-class boats, and consequently might need to either amend the Virginia-class naming rule or begin making a series of exceptions to the rule.

Aircraft Carriers (CVNs)

The July 2012 Navy report to Congress states that "while carrier names are still 'individually considered,' they are now generally named in honor of past US Presidents."[26] Of the 14 most recently named aircraft carriers (those with hull numbers 67 through 80), 10 have been named for U.S. Presidents and 2 for Members of Congress.

The Navy is currently procuring Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78) class carriers.[27] On January 16, 2007, the Navy announced that CVN-78, the lead ship in the CVN-78 class, would be named for President Gerald R. Ford. On May 29, 2011, the Navy announced that CVN-79, the second ship

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fully funded. (The ship was fully funded by the FY2010 Department of Defense [DOD] appropriations act [H.R. 3326/P.L. 111-118], which was signed into law on December 19, 2009.) Naming a ship almost a year before it is funded is unusual. Winter stepped down as Secretary of the Navy on March 13, 2009. If SSN-785 had not been named for Warner, the 111th Congress might have had an opportunity to consider whether CVN-79, the next Ford-class carrier, should be named for Warner. One observer has argued that in light of Warner's record and past traditions for naming Navy ships, "he should be honored by an aircraft carrier (two CVNs [nuclear-powered aircraft carriers] have been named for Members of Congress) or possibly the lead ship for the planned class of CG(X) cruisers—but not a submarine." (Norman Polmar, "Misnaming Navy Ships (Again)," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, February 2009: 89.)

[23] DOD News Release No. NR-009-15, "Navy Names New Virginia-Class Attack Submarine," January 9, 2015. As discussed elsewhere in this report (see footnote 12, **Table 2**, and the section entitled "Overview of Congressional Influence on Navy Ship-Naming Decisions"), a previous attack submarine—the Los Angeles-class submarine SSN-709—was named for Rickover.

[24] For more on the Navy's shipbuilding plan, see CRS Report RL32665, *Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[25] A total of 18 Ohio-class boats were built, of which 17 were named for states. (The fifth boat in the class, SSBN-730, was named for Senator Henry M. Jackson.) The 18 boats were all built as SSBNs; the first four boats in the class were later converted into cruise missile submarines (SSGNs). For more on the Ohio-class boats, see CRS Report R41129, *Navy Columbia (SSBN-826) Class Ballistic Missile Submarine Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[26] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 37.

[27] For more on the CVN-78 program, see CRS Report RS20643, *Navy Ford (CVN-78) Class Aircraft Carrier Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

in the class, would be named for President John F. Kennedy.[28] On December 1, 2012, the Navy announced that CVN-80, the third ship in the class, would be named *Enterprise*. The Navy made the announcement on the same day that it deactivated the 51-year-old aircraft carrier CVN-65, also named *Enterprise*.[29] CVN-80 is the ninth Navy ship named *Enterprise*. CVN-80 was procured in the FY2018 budget, which Congress considered in 2017. If CVN-80, like most Navy ships, had been named at about the time of procurement, or later, rather than in 2012, it would have been named by the current Secretary of the Navy, Richard Spencer. The July 2012 Navy report to Congress, which was produced when Ray Mabus was the Secretary of the Navy, states that

> Secretary [of the Navy Ray] Mabus values the ability to consider [aircraft] carrier names on an individual, case-by-case basis, for two reasons. First, it will allow a future Secretary to name a future fleet aircraft carrier for someone or something other than a former President. Indeed, Secretary Mabus has a particular name in mind. With the scheduled decommissioning of USS Enterprise (CVN 65), perhaps the most famous ship name in US Navy history besides USS Constitution will be removed from the Naval Vessel Register. Secretary Mabus believes this circumstance could be remedied by bestowing the Enterprise's storied name on a future carrier.[30]

Prior to the naming of CVN-80, the most recent carrier that was not named for a President or Member of Congress was the second of the 14 most recently named carriers, *Nimitz* (CVN-68), which was procured in FY1967.[31]

Destroyers (DDGs)

Destroyers traditionally have been named for famous U.S. naval leaders and distinguished heroes. The July 2012 Navy report to Congress discusses this tradition and states more specifically that destroyers are being named for deceased members of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, including Secretaries of the Navy. Exceptions since 2012 (all of which involve Arleigh Burke [DDG-51] class destroyers)[32] include the following:

- On May 7, 2012, the Navy announced that it was naming DDG-116 for a living person,[33] Thomas Hudner.[34]

[28] DOD News Release No. 449-11, "Navy Names Next Aircraft Carrier USS John F. Kennedy," May 29, 2011. CVN-79 will be the second aircraft carrier named for Kennedy. The first, CV-67, was the last conventionally powered carrier procured for the Navy. CV-67 was procured in FY1963, entered service in 1968, and was decommissioned in 2007.

[29] "Enterprise, Navy's First Nuclear-Powered Aircraft Carrier, Inactivated," *Navy News Service*, December 1, 2012; Hugh Lessig, "Navy Retires One Enterprise, Will Welcome Another," *Newport News Daily Press*, December 2, 2012.

[30] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 37.

[31] CVN-68 was named for Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, a five-star admiral who commanded U.S. and allied forces in the Pacific in World War II. Nimitz died in 1966, the same year that Congress considered the FY1967 defense budget that funded the procurement of CVN-68.

[32] For more on the Navy's destroyer procurement programs, see CRS Report RL32109, *Navy DDG-51 and DDG-1000 Destroyer Programs: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[33] Throughout this report, the term *living person* means a person who was living at the time the name was announced.

[34] DOD News Release No. 352-12, "Secretary of the Navy Announces DDG 116 to Be Named Thomas Hudner," May 7, 2012.

- On May 23, 2013, the Navy announced that it was naming DDG-117 for a living person, Paul Ignatius, and that it was naming DDG-118 for the late Senator Daniel Inouye, who served in the U.S. Army during World War II.[35]
- On March 31 and April 5, 2016, it was reported that the Navy was naming DDG-120 for a living person, former Senator Carl Levin.[36]
- On July 28, 2016, the Navy announced that it was naming DDG-124 for a living person, Harvey C. Barnum Jr.[37]
- On July 11, 2018, Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer announced that the Navy was expanding the name of the destroyer *John. S. McCain* (DDG-56) to include a living person, Senator John S. McCain III.[38]
- On May 6, 2019, the Navy announced that it was naming DDG-133 for a living person, former Senator Sam Nunn, who had served in the Coast Guard from 1959 to 1960, and in the Coast Guard Reserve from 1960 until 1968.[39]

As of October 16, 2019, the Navy had announced names for all DDG-51 class destroyers procured through DDG-134, one of three DDG-51s requested for procurement in FY2020.

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[35] DOD News Release No. 361-13, "Navy Names Next Two Destroyers," May 23, 2013.

[36] General Dynamics press release, "Navy Awards General Dynamics Bath Iron Works $644 Million for Construction of DDG 51 Class Destroyer," March 31, 2016, and Associated Press, "Navy Naming Destroyer after Former Michigan Senator Carl Levin," *Military Times*, April 5, 2016.

[37] "Secretary Mabus Names Destroyer for Medal of Honor Recipient," Navy News Service, July 28, 2016.

[38] On July 11, 2018, Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer announced that the Navy was expanding the name of the destroyer John. S. McCain (DDG-56), originally named for Admiral John S. "Slew" McCain (1884-1945) and his son, Admiral John S. "Jack" McCain Jr. (1911-1981), to also include Senator John S. McCain III, the grandson of Admiral John S. McCain and the son of Admiral John S. McCain Jr. DDG-56 was procured in FY1989 and was commissioned into service on July 2, 1994. John S. McCain III served as a Member of the House of Representatives from 1983 to 1987, and as a Senator from 1987 to 2018. Among his committee chairmanships, he was the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee from January 3, 2015, until his death on August 25, 2018. He was the Republican Party candidate for President in 2008. A July 12, 2018, notice from Secretary Spencer stated the following:

> Expanding the name of USS JOHN S. MCCAIN to include Senator McCain properly honors three generations of dedicated service to our Navy and nation. Admiral John S. McCain (1884-1945), served as a distinguished carrier task force commander of World War II. Admiral John S. McCain, Jr. (1911-1981), served as the former Commander-in- Chief, U.S. Pacific Command. Senator John S. McCain III, continued the legacy of service as a Naval Aviator during the Vietnam War. As a prisoner of war, McCain represented our nation with dignity and returned with honor.
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> (Richard V. Spencer, SecNav notice 5030, July 12, 2018, "Name Added to Ship Currently in Fleet," posted at "VIDEO: Sen. John McCain Added to Destroyer's Namesake Along with Father, Grandfather," *USNI News*, July 11, 2018.)

See also the press release entitled "U.S. Navy Names Ship After U.S. Senator John McCain," July 11, 2018, accessed July 12, 2018, at https://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2018/7/u-s-navy-names-ship-after-u-s-senator-john-mccain; Caitlin Doornbos, "McCain Joins Father and Grandfather on Ship's List of Namesakes," *Stars and Stripes*, July 11, 2018. See also "VIDEO: Sen. John McCain Added to Destroyer's Namesake Along with Father, Grandfather," *USNI News*, July 11, 2018; Ken Moritsugu (Associated Press), "US Navy Dedicates Japan-Based Destroyer to US Sen. McCain," *Navy Times*, July 12, 2018.

[39] See Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs, "SECNAV Names New Destroyer In Honor of US Senator from Georgia," *Navy News Service*, May 6, 2019. Nunn was a Senator from 1972 to 1997. During his time in the Senate, he was, among other things, the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee from January 1987 to January 1995.

Frigates (FFG[X]s)

The Navy in 2017 initiated a new program, called the FFG(X) program, to build a class of 20 guided-missile frigates (FFGs). The Navy wants to procure the first FFG(X) in FY2020, the second in FY2021, and the remaining 18 at a rate of 2 per year in FY2022-FY2030.[40] As of October 16, 2019, the Navy had not announced a naming rule for this planned new class of ships. Previous classes of U.S. Navy frigates, like Navy destroyers, were generally named for naval leaders and heroes.

Littoral Combat Ships (LCSs)

A total of 35 Littoral Combat Ships (LCSs) have been procured through FY2019; the Navy does not want to procure any more LCSs.[41] LCSs were at first named for U.S. mid-tier cities, small towns, and other U.S. communities.[42] The naming rule was later adjusted to regionally important U.S. cities and communities. An exception occurred on February 10, 2012, when the Navy announced that it was naming LCS-10 for former Representative Gabrielle Giffords.[43]

Another exception occurred on February 23, 2018, when President Trump, in a press conference with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, announced that an LCS would be named *Canberra*, in honor of HMAS *Canberra* (D33), an Australian cruiser named for the capital city of Australia that fought alongside U.S. Navy forces in World War II[44] and was scuttled after being damaged by Japanese attack in the Battle of Savo Island on August 9, 1942. The Navy has identified the LCS to be named *Canberra* as LCS-30.[45] A previous U.S. Navy ship, the gun cruiser *Canberra* (CA-70), which served from 1943 to 1947 and again from 1956 to 1970, was similarly named in honor of HMAS *Canberra*. There is also a current HMAS *Canberra* (L02), an amphibious assault ship (i.e., helicopter carrier) that entered service in 2014 and now serves as the flagship of the Australian navy.[46] The situation of LCS-30 and L02 sharing the same name will presumably not violate 10 U.S.C. §8662(a)—which states that "not more than one vessel of the Navy may have the same name"—because 10 U.S.C. §8662 is a statute governing the naming of U.S. Navy ships and L02 is not a U.S. Navy ship.

The Navy has posted or announced names for all 35 LCSs procured through FY2019 (i.e., LCSs up through LCS-31, plus LCS-32, LCS-34, LCS-36, and LCS-38).

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[40] For more on the FFG(X) program, see CRS Report R44972, *Navy Frigate (FFG[X]) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[41] For more on the LCS program, see CRS Report RL33741, *Navy Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[42] The Navy named LCS-1 and LCS-2 *Freedom* and *Independence*, respectively, after multiple U.S. cities with these names.

[43] DOD News Release No. 096-12, "Navy Names Littoral Combat Ship Gabrielle Giffords," February 10, 2012. For the Navy's discussion of this naming choice, see Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 33-34.

[44] Richard R. Burgess, "President Trump Names Navy LCS for World War II Australian Cruiser," *Seapower*, February 23, 2018.

[45] Source for LCS-30 as the LCS in question: Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, "Canberra II (LCS-30)," accessed April 23, 2018.

[46] In between D33 and L02, there was also HMAS *Canberra* (FFG 02), a frigate that served in Australia's navy from 1981 to 2005.

Amphibious Assault Ships (LHAs)

Amphibious assault ships (LHAs), which look like medium-sized aircraft carriers, are being named for important battles in which U.S. Marines played a prominent part, and for famous earlier U.S. Navy ships that were not named for battles.[47] The Navy announced on June 27, 2008, that the first LHA-6 class amphibious assault ship, LHA-6, would be named *America*, a name previously used for an aircraft carrier (CV-66) that served in the Navy from 1965 to 1996. The Navy announced on May 4, 2012, that LHA-7, the second ship in the class, LHA-7, would be named *Tripoli*, the location of famous Marine battles in the First Barbary War.[48] The Navy reaffirmed this name selection with a more formal announcement on May 30, 2014.[49] On November 9, 2016, the Navy announced that the third ship in the class, LHA-8, will be named *Bougainville*, the location of a famous World War II campaign in the Pacific.[50]

Amphibious Ships (LPDs)

San Antonio (LPD-17) class amphibious ships are being named for major U.S. cities and communities (with major being defined as being one of the top three population centers in a state), and cities and communities attacked on September 11, 2001. An exception occurred on April 23, 2010, when the Navy announced that it was naming LPD-26, the 10th ship in the class, for the late Representative John P. Murtha.[51] Another exception occurred on May 2, 2018, when the Navy announced that it was naming LPD-29, the 13th ship in the class, for Navy Captain Richard M. McCool Jr., who received the Medal of Honor for his actions in World War II and later served in the Korean and Vietnam wars. On October 10, 2019, the Navy announced that LPD-30, which was funded in FY2018, will be named Harrisburg, for the city of Harrisburg, PA.[52] LPD-30 is to be the first of a new version, or flight, of the LPD-17 class design called the LPD-17 Flight II design.[53]

Oilers (TAOs)

On January 6, 2016, then-Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that the Navy's new oilers will be named for "people who fought for civil rights and human rights,"[54] and that the first ship in the class, TAO-205, which was procured in FY2016, will be named for Representative

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[47] For more on the LHA program, see CRS Report R43543, *Navy LPD-17 Flight II and LHA Amphibious Ship Programs: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[48] DOD News Release No. 347-12, "Secretary of the Navy Announces LHA 7 Will Be Named USS Tripoli," May 4, 2012. The name *Tripoli* was previously used for an amphibious assault ship (LPH-10) that served in the Navy from 1966 to 1995, and for an escort carrier (CVE-64) that served in the Navy from 1943 to 1946.

[49] "SECNAV Formally Names USS Tripoli," *Navy News Service*, June 2, 2014.

[50] "SECNAV Names Next Amphibious Assault Ship," *Navy News Service*, November 9, 2016.

[51] DOD News Release No. 329-10, "Navy Names Amphibious Ship For Congressman John Murtha," April 23, 2010. For the Navy's discussion of this naming choice, see Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 28-30. For a recent news report about the naming of this ship, see Dan Lamothe, "As Anger Still Simmers, Navy Christening the USS John P. Murtha," *Washington Post*, March 20, 2015.

[52] Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs, "SECNAV Names Future Amphibious Transport Dock Ship in Honor of the city of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania," *Navy News Service*, October 10, 2019.

[53] For more on the LPD-17 Flight II program, see CRS Report R43543, *Navy LPD-17 Flight II and LHA Amphibious Ship Programs: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[54] Valerie Insinna, "Navy to Name Next Generation Oilers for Civil Rights Icons," *Defense Daily*, January 7, 2016: 4.

John Lewis.[55] The ships in this class consequently are now referred to as John Lewis (TAO-205) class ships. The Navy wants to procure a total of 20 John Lewis-class ships.[56]

On July 28, 2016, it was reported that the Navy would name the second through sixth ships in the class (i.e., TAOs 206 through 210) for Harvey Milk, Earl Warren, Robert F. Kennedy, Lucy Stone, and Sojourner Truth, respectively.[57] All these names were later posted by the Navy for these ships.

Dry Cargo and Ammunition Ships (TAKEs)

The Navy's 14 Lewis and Clark (TAKE-1) class cargo and ammunition ships were named for famous American explorers, trailblazers, and pioneers. The Navy announced on October 9, 2009, that the 13th ship in the class was being named for the civil rights activist Medgar Evers.[58] The Navy announced on May 18, 2011, that the 14th ship in the class would be named for civil rights activist Cesar Chavez.[59]

Expeditionary Fast Transports (EPFs)

Expeditionary Fast Transports (EPFs), which until May 2011 were being procured by the Army as well as by the Navy, were at first named for American traits and values. In December 2009, the naming rule for EPFs was changed to small U.S. cities. At some point between December 2010 and October 2011, it was adjusted to small U.S. cities and counties.[60] As of October 16, 2019, the Navy had posted names for all EPFs through EPF-14, which was procured in FY2019.

Expeditionary Transport Docks (ESDs) and Expeditionary Sea Bases (ESBs)

The Navy's two Expeditionary Transport Docks (ESDs 1 and 2) and its Expeditionary Sea Bases (ESB 3 and higher) are being named for famous names or places of historical significance to U.S.

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[55] "Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus Names Fleet Replenishment Oiler," *Navy News Service*, January 6, 2016.

[56] For more on the John Lewis-class program, see CRS Report R43546, *Navy John Lewis (TAO-205) Class Oiler Shipbuilding Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[57] Sam LaGrone, "Navy to Name Ship After Gay Rights Activist Harvey Milk," *USNI News*, July 28, 2016. See also "Document: Notice to Congress on 8 Proposed Navy Ship Names," *USNI News*, August 3, 2016. See also "SECNAV to Name Next John Lewis-Class Oiler After Civil and Human Rights Leader Harvey Milk," Navy Live, July 30, 2016; "Secretary of the Navy Names Newest Fleet Replenishment Oiler, USNS Harvey Milk," *Navy News Service*, August 17, 2016. The first six ships in the class are being procured under a block buy contract.

[58] DOD News Release No. 788-09, "Navy Names Ship After Civil Rights Activist Medgar Evers," October 9, 2009. For the Navy's discussion of this naming choice, see Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 21-22.

[59] DOD News Release No. 420-11, "Navy Names Ship For Civil Rights Activist Cesar Chavez," May 18, 2011. For the Navy's discussion of this naming choice, see Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 22-24. A November 29, 2016, news article states the following: "I got the name Cesar Chavez from the shipyard," [then-Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus] said [referring to General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (GD/NASSCO) of San Diego, CA, the builder of the TAKE-1 class ships]. "They were the ones who recommended it because 85 percent of the shipyard workers in San Diego are Hispanic." (Wyatt Olson, "Outgoing Navy Sec. Mabus Leaves Imprint on Policies, Ship Acquisition," *Military.com*, November 29, 2016.)

[60] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 18-19.

Marines. Two of these ships have been named for living persons—ESD-2, which was named *John Glenn*, and ESB-4, which was named for Hershel "Woody" Williams.

On November 4, 2017, Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer announced that the third ESB (ESB-5), which was procured in FY2016, would be named for Marine Corps Vietnam veteran and Medal of Honor recipient Lance Corporal Miguel Keith.[61] This was Spencer's first announced naming of a Navy ship. A fourth ESB (ESB-6) was procured in FY2018, and a fifth (ESB-7) was procured in FY2019. Navy plans calls for procuring a total of six ESBs.

Towing, Salvage, and Rescue Ships (TATSs)

On March 12, 2019, the Navy announced that that TATS-6, the first ship in a new class of towing, salvage, and rescue ships (TATSs), would be named *Navajo*, and that ships in this class will be named for prominent Native Americans or Native American tribes.[62] On June 21, 2019, the Navy announced that TATS-7, the second ship in the class, would be named *Cherokee Nation*.[63] On July 26, 2019, the Navy announced that TATS-8, the third ship in the class, would be named *Saginaw Ojibwe Anishinabek* in honor of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan.[64]

Aspects of Navy Ship Names

State Names Not Used in a Long Time—Particularly *Kansas*

It has been a long time since ships named for certain states were last in commissioned service with the Navy as combat assets. While there is no rule requiring the Navy, in selecting state names for ships, to choose states for which the most time has passed since a ship named for the state has been in commissioned service with the Navy as a combat asset, advocates of naming a ship for a certain state may choose to point out, among other things, the length of time that has transpired since a ship named for the state has been in commissioned service with the Navy as a combat asset.

In its announcement of April 13, 2012, that the Navy was naming the Virginia class attack submarines SSNs 786 through 790 for Illinois, Washington, Colorado, Indiana, and South Dakota, respectively, the Department of Defense stated, "None of the five states has had a ship named for it for more than 49 years. The most recent to serve was the battleship Indiana, which was decommissioned in October 1963."[65] The July 2012 Navy report to Congress states the following: "Before deciding on which names to select [for the five submarines], [then-]Secretary [of the Navy Ray] Mabus asked for a list of State names that had been absent the longest from the US Naval Register...."[66]

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[61] "SECNAV Spencer Names New Expeditionary Sea Base," *Navy News Service*, November 4, 2017; Sam LaGrone, "Spencer Names First Ship as SECNAV After Vietnam War Marine Miguel Keith," *USNI News*, November 5, 2017.

[62] "SECNAV Names New Class of Towing, Salvage and Rescue Ship Navajo," *Navy News Service*, March 12, 2019.

[63] "SECNAV Names Newest Towing Salvage and Rescue Ship Cherokee Nation," *Navy News Service*, June 21, 2019.

[64] "Secretary of the Navy Names Newest Towing Salvage and Rescue Ship Saginaw Ojibwe Anishinabek," *Navy News Service*, July 26, 2019.

[65] DOD News Release No. 264-12, "Navy Names Five New Submarines," April 13, 2012.

[66] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 48.

In its announcement of November 19, 2012, that the Navy was naming the Virginia class attack submarine SSN-791 for Delaware, the Department of Defense quoted then-Secretary Mabus as saying, "It has been too long since there has been a USS Delaware in the fleet...."[67]

A Navy News Service article about the Navy's September 18, 2014, announcement that the Virginia class attack submarine SSN-792 was being named for Vermont stated that "This is the first ship named for Vermont since 1920[,] when the second USS Vermont was decommissioned."[68]

A Navy News Service article about the Navy's October 10, 2014, announcement that the Virginia class attack submarine SSN-793 was being named for Oregon stated that the previous USS *Oregon* "was a battleship best known for its roles in the Spanish American War when it helped destroy Admiral Cervera's fleet and in the Philippine-American War; it performed blockade duty in Manila Bay and off Lingayen Gulf, served as a station ship, and aided in the capture of Vigan."[69]

A Navy News Service article about the Navy's January 19, 2016, announcement that the Virginia-class attack submarine SSN-801 was being named for Utah stated, "The future USS Utah will be the second naval vessel to bear the name; the first, a battleship designated BB-31, was commissioned in 1911 and had a long, honorable time in service.... While conducting anti-gunnery exercises in Pearl Harbor, BB-31 was struck by a torpedo and capsized during the initial stages of the Japanese attack [on December 7, 1941]. She was struck from the Navy record Nov. 13, 1944 and received a battle star for her service in World War I."[70]

The Navy's naming announcements for Virginia-class submarines have reduced the group of states for which several decades had passed since a ship named for the state had been in commissioned service with the Navy as a combat asset, and for which no ship by that name is currently under construction. This group used to include Illinois, Delaware, Vermont, Oregon, and Montana, but Virginia-class attack submarines have now been named for these states. (See the Virginia-class attack submarine naming announcements of April 13, 2012; November 19, 2012; September 18, 2014; October 10, 2014; and September 2, 2015, respectively.)

As shown in **Table 1**, the three states for which the most time now appears to have passed since a ship named for the state has been in commissioned service with the Navy as a combat asset, and for which no ship by that name is currently under construction, are Kansas, Arizona, and Oklahoma. In particular, as of October 16, 2019, it has been more than 97 years since the decommissioning on December 16, 1921, of the battleship *Kansas* (BB-21), the most recent ship named for the state of Kansas that was in commissioned service with the Navy as a combat asset.

[67] DOD News Release No. 914-12, "Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus Names the Next Virginia-Class Submarine USS Delaware with Dr. Jill Biden as the Sponsor," November 19, 2012.

[68] "SECNAV Names Virginia-class Submarine, USS Vermont," *Navy News Service*, September 18, 2014.

[69] "Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus Names Virginia-Class Submarine USS Oregon," Navy News Service, October 10, 2014.

[70] "Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus Names Virginia-Class Submarine," *Navy News Service*, January 19, 2016. BB-31 was decommissioned on September 5, 1944, and then struck from the navy record on November 13, 1944.

Table 1. State Names That Have Not Been Used in a Long Time

State	Most recent ship named for that state	Notes
Kansas	The battleship *Kansas* (BB-21), decommissioned in 1921	The Littoral Combat Ship *Kansas City* (LCS-22), named for the adjacent cities of Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas, is under construction. LCS-22 was procured in FY2015 and is scheduled to enter service in FY2019. Its name was announced in July 2015 by then-Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus.
Arizona	The battleship *Arizona* (BB-39), decommissioned 1941	BB-39 was decommissioned on December 29, 1941, following its sinking in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. BB-39 now serves as a memorial.
Oklahoma	The battleship *Oklahoma* (BB-37), decommissioned in 1944	BB-37 was sunk in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The ship was raised and surveyed. It was found to be too economical to repair, and was decommissioned in 1944. The attack submarine *Oklahoma City* (SSN-723) entered service in 1988 and will reach the end of its 33-year expected service life in 2021.

Source: Table prepared by CRS, based on data in Naval Vessel Register (http://www.nvr.navy.mil/). The Navy states that LCS-22 is named for "the large cities in Missouri and Kansas." ("Kansas City II (LCS-22)," accessed September 14, 2016, at https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs/k/kansas-city-ii—lcs-22-.html.)

As discussed earlier in the section on rules for naming SSNs, starting around FY2022, the Navy might run out of state names for Virginia-class boats, and consequently might need to either amend the Virginia-class naming rule or begin making a series of exceptions to the rule.

Ships Named for Living Persons

The Navy historically has only rarely named ships for living persons, meaning (throughout this CRS report) persons who were living at the time the name was announced. The Navy stated in February 2012 that

> The Navy named several ships for living people (ex. George Washington, Ben Franklin, etc.) in the early years of our Republic. The Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) believes that the last ship to be named by the Navy in honor of a living person prior to [the aircraft carrier] CARL VINSON (CVN-70) was the brig JEFFERSON (launched in April 1814). Between 1814 and November 18, 1973, when President Nixon announced the naming of CARL VINSON,[71] NHHC does not believe that any ships had been named for a living person by the Navy as NHHC does not have records that would indicate such.[72]

The July 2012 Navy report to Congress, noting a case from 1900 that was not included in the above passage, states that

> the practice of naming ships in honor of deserving Americans or naval leaders while they are still alive can be traced all the way back to the Revolutionary War. At the time, with little established history or tradition, the young Continental Navy looked to honor those who were fighting so hard to earn America's freedom. Consequently, George Washington had no less than five ships named for him before his death; John Adams and James Madison, three apiece; John Hancock, two; and Benjamin Franklin, one.

[71] Although President Nixon announced on November 18, 1973 that CVN-70 would be named for Carl Vinson, as shown in **Table 2**, the name apparently was officially given to the ship on January 18, 1974.

[72] Navy information paper dated February 28, 2012, provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, March 1, 2012.

> The practice of naming ships after living persons was relatively commonplace up through 1814, when a US Navy brig was named in honor of Thomas Jefferson. However, after the War of 1812, with the US Navy older and more established, and with the list of famous Americans and notable naval heroes growing ever longer, the practice of naming ships after living persons fell into disuse. Indeed, the only exception over the next 150 years came in 1900, when the Navy purchased its first submarine from its still living inventor, John Philip Holland, and Secretary of the Navy John D. Long named her USS Holland (SS 1) in his honor....
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> [In the early 1970s], however, Department of the Navy leaders were considering the name for CVN 70. Secretary of the Navy John Warner knew the 93rd Congress had introduced no less than three bills or amendments (none enacted) urging that CVN 70 be named for in honor of Carl Vinson, who served in the House for 50 years and was known as the "Father of the Two-Ocean Navy." Although Secretary Warner felt Congressman Vinson was more than worthy of a ship name, the former Congressman was still alive. Naming a ship for this giant of naval affairs would therefore violate a 160-year old tradition. After considering the pros and cons of doing so, Secretary Warner asked President Richard Nixon's approval to name CVN 70 for the 90-year old statesman. President Nixon readily agreed. Indeed, he personally announced the decision on January 18, 1974....
>
> In hindsight, rather than this decision being a rare exception, it signaled a return to the Continental Navy tradition of occasionally honoring famous living persons with a ship name. Since then, and before the appointment of current Secretary [now then-Secretary] of the Navy Ray Mabus, Secretaries of the Navy have occasionally chosen to follow this new, "old tradition," naming ships in honor of still living former Presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Gerald R. Ford; Secretary of the Navy Paul Nitze; Navy Admirals Hyman G. Rickover, Arleigh Burke, and Wayne E. Meyer; Senators John C. Stennis and John Warner; and famous entertainer Bob Hope. Moreover, it is important to note that three of these well-known Americans—Gerald R. Ford, John C. Stennis, and Bob Hope—were so honored after Congress enacted provisions in Public Laws urging the Navy to do so. By its own actions, then, Congress has acknowledged the practice of occasionally naming ships for living persons, if not outright approved of it.
>
> In other words, while naming ships after living persons remains a relatively rare occurrence—about three per decade since 1970—it is now an accepted but sparingly used practice for Pragmatic Secretaries [of the Navy] of both parties. For them, occasionally honoring an especially deserving member of Congress, US naval leader, or famous American with a ship name so that they might end their days on earth knowing that their life's work is both recognized and honored by America's Navy-Marine Corps Team, and that their spirit will accompany and inspire the Team in battle, is sometimes exactly the right thing to do.[73]

As shown in **Table 2**, since the naming of CVN-70 for Carl Vinson in 1974, at least 21 U.S. military ships have been named for persons who were living at the time the name was announced. Eight of the 21 were announced between January 2012 and March 2016, including three announced in 2012 and four announced in 2016. In four of the six most-recent instances, the ships were named for current or former Members of Congress. The most recent instance occurred on May 6, 2019, when the Navy announced that it was naming the destroyer DDG-51 for former Senator Sam Nunn. (For further discussion of that naming action, see the earlier section on names for destroyers.)

[73] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 7-9.

Table 2. Ships Since 1973 Named for Persons Who Were Living at the Time

Ship type	Hull number	Ship name	Date name announced	Age of person when name was announced	Fiscal year ship was procured	Year ship entered or *is to enter service*
Aircraft carrier	CVN-70	*Carl Vinson*	1/18/1974	90	FY1974	1982
Attack submarine	SSN-709	*Hyman G. Rickover*	5/9/1983	83	FY1974	1984
Destroyer	DDG-51	*Arleigh Burke*	11/5/1982	81	FY1985	1991
Aircraft carrier	CVN-74	*John C. Stennis*	6/23/1988[a]	86	FY1988	1995
Sealift ship	TAKR-300	*Bob Hope*	1/27/1994	90	FY1993	1998
Aircraft carrier	CVN-76	*Ronald Reagan*	2/2/1995	83	FY1995	2003
Attack submarine	SSN-23	*Jimmy Carter*	4/8/1998	73	FY1996[b]	2005
Destroyer	DDG-94	*Nitze*	1/10/2001	93	FY1999	2005
Aircraft carrier	CVN-77	*George H.W. Bush*	12/9/2002	78	FY2001	2009
Destroyer	DDG-108	*Wayne E. Meyer*	11/29/2006	80	FY2004	2009
Attack submarine	SSN-785	*John Warner*	1/8/2009	81	FY2010	2015
Expeditionary transport dock	ESD-2	*John Glenn*	1/4/2012	90	FY2011	2014
Littoral Combat Ship	LCS-10	*Gabrielle Giffords*	2/10/2012	41	FY2012	2017
Destroyer	DDG-116	*Thomas Hudner*	5/7/2012	87	FY2012	2017
Destroyer	DDG-117	*Paul Ignatius*	5/23/2013	92	FY2013	2018
Oiler	TAO-205	*John Lewis*	1/6/2016	75	FY2016	*2020*
Expeditionary Sea Base	ESB-4	*Hershel "Woody" Williams*	1/14/16	92	FY2014	2018
Destroyer	DDG-120	*Carl Levin*	3/31/16	81	FY2013	*2020*
Destroyer	DDG-124	*Harvey C. Barnum Jr.*	7/28/16	75	FY2016	*2021*
Destroyer	DDG-56	*John S. McCain*	7/11/2018[c]	81	FY1989	1994
Destroyer	DDG-133	*Sam Nunn*	5/6/2019	80	FY2020[d]	*2026*

Source: Compiled by CRS. Source for dates when names were announced for CVN-70 through DDG-108: Navy Office of Legislative Affairs email to CRS, May 1, 2012. Sources for dates when names of ships after DDG-108 were announced: Navy announcements and news accounts on the naming of those ships.

a. This was the date that President Reagan announced that the ship would be named for Stennis. The Navy officially named the ship for Stennis on December 19, 1988.

b. SSN-23 was originally procured in FY1992. Its procurement was suspended, and then reinstated in FY1996.

c. On July 11, 2018, the Navy announced that it was expanding the name of the destroyer *John. S. McCain* (DDG-56), originally named for Admiral John S. McCain (1884-1945) and Admiral John S. McCain Jr. (1911-1981), to also include Senator John S. McCain III.

d. DDG-133 is one of three DDG-51 class ships requested for procurement in FY2020.

Ships Named for Confederate Officers

A June 15, 2017, blog post states the following:

> Four [past U.S. Navy] ships have been named for Confederate officers: the [ballistic missile submarine/attack submarine] USS Robert E. Lee (SSBN-601[/SSN-601]) [commissioned 1960; decommissioned 1983], the [ballistic missile submarine] USS Stonewall Jackson (SSBN-634) [commissioned 1964; decommissioned 1995], the [submarine tender] USS Hunley (AS-31) [commissioned 1962; decommissioned 1994], and the [submarine tender] USS Dixon (AS-37) [commissioned 1971; decommissioned 1995]. H. L. Hunley built the Confederate submarine that sank with him on board before it engaged in combat. A subsequent Confederate submarine was built and named for him. Commanded by George Dixon, the CSS Hunley carried out the world's first submarine attack when it struck the [sloop-of-war] USS Housatonic in February1864.

> Currently in the fleet is the [Ticonderoga (CG-47) class Aegis cruiser] USS Chancellorsville (CG-62) [commissioned 1989], named for Lee's greatest victory over the U.S. Army. Chancellorsville also was the battle in which Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson was mortally wounded by friendly fire.
>
> The purpose of erecting monuments and naming U.S. ships after Confederates—enemies of the United States—seems to be to recognize their perceived status as noble warriors rather than to remember the cause for which they waged war: the dissolution of the United States to preserve the "peculiar institution" of human slavery. This view of history is not shared by millions of Americans who see the monuments to Confederates as glorifying, even justifying the "lost cause" and the enslavement of humans.
>
> Other ships have been named for enemies [of the United States], probably because they were considered "noble warriors" too. [The ballistic missile submarine] USS Tecumseh (SSBN-628) [commissioned 1964; decommissioned 1993][74] and [the harbor tug] USS Osceola (YTB-129) [commissioned 1938; sold for scrapping 1973][75] were named after American Indian leaders who fought wars against the United States.[76]

Regarding the *Chancellorsville*, the Navy states that the cruiser is

> The first U.S. Navy ship named for a Civil War battle fought just south of the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers in Virginia (1–5 May 1863). Gen. Robert E. Lee, CSA, who led the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, held Gen. Joseph Hooker, USA, who commanded the Union Army and Department of the Potomac, in position while Lt. Gen. Thomas J. Jackson, CSA, enveloped the Union right flank, surprising and rolling up the Federal's right. Lee's victory, combined with the urgent need to relieve pressure on Vicksburg, Miss., prompted the South's thrust into Pennsylvania that summer, resulting in the pivotal Battle of Gettysburg.[77]

An August 16, 2017, press report states the following:

> As America churns through a bloody debate over the place Confederate monuments occupy in the modern day United States, a Navy cruiser named in honor of a Confederate Civil War victory is unlikely to see its named changed, a service official said Wednesday [August 16].

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[74] There were also earlier Navy ships named Tecumseh, including YT-273, a harbor tug placed into service in 1943, renamed Olathe in 1962, and removed from service in 1975; a tug originally named Edward Luckenbach that was completed in 1896, acquired by the Navy, renamed Tecumseh, and placed into service in 1898, and then served for various periods, going repeatedly into and out of commission, from 1899 into the 1940s; and a Union Navy monitor that was commissioned in 1864 and sunk in battle later that year against Confederate forces.

Primary source: *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, accessed October 27, 2017, at https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs.html.

[75] There were also earlier Navy ships named Osceola, including AT-47, an armed tug commissioned in 1898, recommissioned in 1911, and struck from the Navy in 1922; a monitor originally named Neosho that served in the Union Navy from 1863 to 1865, was renamed Vixen in 1869, was again renamed Osceola later in 1869, and sold in 1873; and a gunboat in the Union Navy that was commissioned in 1864 and decommissioned in 1865.

Primary source: *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, accessed October 27, 2017, at https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs.html.

[76] Earl J. Higgins, "Confederate Monuments At Sea?" *U.S. Naval Institute Blog*, June 15 2017. See also Geoff Ziezulewicz, "Meet the Navy Ships Named in Honor of the Confederacy," *Navy Times*, August 15, 2017.

[77] "Chancellorsville (CG-62), 1989-," *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, accessed October 27, 2017, at https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs/c/chancellorsville—cg-62—1989-.html.

> The guided-missile cruiser Chancellorsville [CG-62] was commissioned in 1989 and derives its name from an 1863 battle considered to be the greatest victory of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee....
>
> But a Navy official speaking on the condition of anonymity Wednesday said that even though the Chancellorsville is named after a Confederate victory, the name comes from a battle, not an individual, and soldiers on both sides died.
>
> The week-long battle resulted in major casualties for both sides—13,000 Confederates and 17,000 Union troops, according to the National Parks [sic: Park] Service.
>
> The Navy official did say, however, that there remains a chance the ship's crest could be altered.
>
> The predominance of gray in the ship's crest speaks to "General Robert E. Lee's spectacular military strategies and his dominance in this battle," according to the ship's website.
>
> An inverted wreath also memorializes the Confederacy's second-best known general, Stonewall Jackson, who was mortally wounded in the battle.
>
> While the rupture of the country during the Civil War is reflected in the crest, it also features Jackson's order to "press on."
>
> "Maybe that is worth re-looking at or redoing," the official said. "There's a fine line."[78]

Ships Named Several Years Before They Were Procured

In recent years, the Navy on a few occasions has announced names for ships years before those ships were procured. Although announcing a name for a ship years before it is procured is not prohibited, doing so could deprive a future Secretary of the Navy (or, more broadly, a future Administration) of the opportunity to select a name for the ship. It could also deprive Congress of an opportunity to express its sense regarding potential names for a ship, and create a risk of assigning a name to a ship that eventually is not procured for some reason, a situation that could be viewed as potentially embarrassing to the Navy. As noted earlier, the July 2012 Navy report to Congress states the following:

> At the appropriate time—normally sometime after the ship has been either authorized or appropriated by Congress and before its keel laying or christening—the Secretary records his decision with a formal naming announcement.[79]

At the end of the above passage, there is a footnote (number 3) in the Navy report that states the following:

> Although there is no hard and fast rule, Secretaries most often name a ship after Congress has appropriated funds for its construction or approved its future construction in some way—such as authorization of either block buys or multi-year procurements of a specific number of ships. There are special cases, however, when Secretaries use their discretion to name ships before formal Congressional approval, such as when Secretary John Lehman announced the namesake for a new class of Aegis guided missile destroyers would be

[78] Geoff Ziezulewicz, "Navy Official: Ship Name Honoring Confederate Victory Unlikely to Change," *Navy Times*, August 16, 2017.

[79] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 3.

> Admiral Arleigh Burke, several years before the ship was either authorized or appropriated.[80]

In connection with the quoted footnote passage immediately above, it can be noted that the lead ship of the DDG-51 class of destroyers was named for Arleigh Burke on November 5, 1982, about two years before the ship was authorized and fully funded.[81]

Recent examples of Navy ships whose names were announced more than two years before they were procured include the following:[82]

- **The destroyer *Zumwalt* (DDG-1000).** On July 4, 2000, President Bill Clinton announced that DDG-1000, the lead ship in a new class of destroyers, would be named *Zumwalt* in honor of Admiral Elmo Zumwalt Jr., the Chief of Naval Operations from 1970 to 1974, who had died on January 2, 2000. At the time of the naming announcement, Congress was considering the Navy's proposed FY2001 budget, under which DDG-1000 was scheduled for authorization in FY2005, a budget that Congress would consider in 2004, which was then about four years in the future.[83]
- **The aircraft carrier *Enterprise* (CVN-80).** As noted earlier, on December 1, 2012, the Navy announced that CVN-80, the third Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78) class aircraft carrier, would be named *Enterprise*. At the time of the announcement, CVN-80 was scheduled for procurement in FY2018, the budget for which Congress was to consider in 2017, which was then more than four years in the future.[84] (CVN-80 was in fact procured in FY2018.)
- **The ballistic missile submarine (SSBN-826) *Columbia*.** As noted earlier, on July 28, 2016, it was reported that the first Ohio replacement ballistic missile submarine (SSBN-826) will be named *Columbia* in honor of the District of Columbia. This ship is scheduled for procurement in FY2021, the budget for

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[80] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 3.

[81] Congress authorized the ship in the FY1985 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 5167/P.L. 98-525 of October 19, 1984), and fully funded the ship in H.J.Res. 648/P.L. 98-473 of October 12, 1984, a joint resolution making continuing appropriations for FY1985, and for other purposes.

[82] In response to a request from CRS for examples in recent years of ships that were named well in advance of when they were authorized, the Navy on December 7, 2012, sent an email citing the case of the destroyer *Zumwalt* (DDG-1000) and two other ships (the destroyer *Arleigh Burke* [DDG-51] and the amphibious ship *San Antonio* [LPD-17]) whose naming lead times were substantially less than that of the *Zumwalt*.

[83] The FY2006 budget submission subsequently deferred the scheduled procurement of DDG-1000 to FY2007. DDG-1000 and the second ship in the class, DDG-1001, were procured in FY2007 using split funding (i.e., two-year incremental funding) in FY2007 and FY2008.

[84] The July 2012 Navy report to Congress states that

> [Then-]Secretary [of the Navy Ray] Mabus values the ability to consider [aircraft] carrier names on an individual, case-by-case basis, for two reasons. First, it will allow a future Secretary to name a future fleet aircraft carrier for someone or something other than a former President. Indeed, [then-] Secretary Mabus has a particular name in mind. With the scheduled decommissioning of USS Enterprise (CVN 65), perhaps the most famous ship name in US Navy history besides USS Constitution will be removed from the Naval Vessel Register. [Then-]Secretary Mabus believes this circumstance could be remedied by bestowing the Enterprise's storied name on a future carrier.
>
> (Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 37.)

which Congress is to consider in 2020, which in July 2016 was about four years in the future.

- **Three John Lewis (TAO-205) class oilers.** As noted earlier, on July 28, 2016, it was reported that the Navy would name the second through sixth *John Lewis* (TAO-205) class oilers (i.e., TAOs 206 through 210) for Harvey Milk, Earl Warren, Robert F. Kennedy, Lucy Stone, and Sojourner Truth, respectively. In 2016, these five ships were scheduled for procurement in FY2018, FY2019, FY2020, FY2021, and FY2022, respectively, the budgets for which Congress has considered or will consider in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021, respectively. Thus, using the procurement dates that were scheduled in 2016, the name for TAO-208 (*Robert F. Kennedy*) was announced about three years before it was to be procured, the name for TAO-209 (*Lucy Stone*) was announced about four years it was to be procured, and the name for TAO-210 (*Sojourner Truth*) was announced about five years before it was to be procured. As discussed in the CRS report on the TAO-205 class program, the first six ships in the TAO-205 class are being procured under a block buy contract that Congress authorized as part of its action on the FY2016 defense budget.[85] The procurement of each ship under this contract remains subject to the availability of appropriations for that purpose.[86]

Public's Role in Naming Ships

Members of the public are sometimes interested in having Navy ships named for their own states or cities, for earlier U.S. Navy ships (particularly those on which they or their relatives served), for battles in which they or their relatives participated, or for people they admire. Citizens with such an interest sometimes contact the Navy, the Department of Defense, or Congress seeking support for their proposals. An October 2008 news report, for example, suggested that a letter-writing campaign by New Hampshire elementary school students that began in January 2004 was instrumental in the Navy's decision in August 2004 to name a Virginia-class submarine after the state.[87] The July 2012 Navy report to Congress states the following:

> In addition to receiving input and recommendations from the President and Congress, every Secretary of the Navy receives numerous requests from service members, citizens, interest groups, or individual members of Congress who want to name a ship in honor of a particular hometown, or State, or place, or hero, or famous ship. This means the "nomination" process is often fiercely contested as differing groups make the case that "their" ship name is the most fitting choice for a Secretary to make.[88]

Members of the public may also express their opposition to an announced naming decision. The July 2012 Navy report to Congress cites and discusses five recent examples of ship-naming decisions that were criticized by some observers: the destroyer DDG-1002 (named for President

[85] The contract was authorized by Section 127 of the FY2016 National Defense Authorization Act (S. 1356/P.L. 114-92 of November 25, 2015).

[86] Section 127 of P.L. 114-92 states that "Any contract entered into under subsection (a) [of Section 127] shall provide that any obligation of the United States to make a payment under the contract is subject to the availability of appropriations for that purpose, and that total liability to the Government for termination of any contract entered into shall be limited to the total amount of funding obligated at the time of termination."

[87] Dean Lohmeyer, "Students Who Helped Name the Navy's Newest Sub Tour State's Namesake," *Navy News Service*, October 25, 2008.

[88] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 12-13.

Lyndon Johnson), the Littoral Combat Ship LCS-10 (named for former Representative Gabrielle Giffords), the amphibious ship LPD-26 (named for late Representative John P. Murtha), the auxiliary ship TAKE-13 (named for Medgar Evers), and the auxiliary ship TAKE-14 (named for Cesar Chavez).[89]

Congress's Role in Naming Ships

Overview of Congressional Influence on Navy Ship-Naming Decisions

Congress has long maintained an interest in how Navy ships are named,[90] and has influenced or may have influenced pending Navy decisions on the naming of certain ships, including but not limited to the following:

- One source states that "[the aircraft carriers] CVN 72 and CVN 73 were named prior to their start [of construction], in part to preempt potential congressional pressure to name one of those ships for Admiral H.G. Rickover ([instead,] the [attack submarine] SSN 709 was named for the admiral)."[91]
- There was a friendly rivalry of sorts in Congress between those who supported naming the aircraft carrier CVN-76 for President Truman and those who supported naming it for President Reagan; the issue was effectively resolved by a decision announced by President Clinton in February 1995 to name one carrier (CVN-75) for Truman and another (CVN-76) for Reagan.[92]
- One press report suggests that the decision to name CVN-77 for President George H. W. Bush may have been influenced by a congressional suggestion.[93]
- Section 1012 of the FY2007 John Warner National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 5122/P.L. 109-364 of October 17, 2006), expressed the sense of the Congress that the aircraft carrier CVN-78 should be named for President Gerald R. Ford. The Navy announced on January 16, 2007, that CVN-78 would be named *Gerald R. Ford*.
- In the 111th Congress, H.Res. 1505, introduced on July 1, 2010, expressed the sense of the House of Representatives that the Secretary of the Navy should name the next appropriate naval ship in honor of John William Finn. The measure was not acted on after being referred to the House Armed Services

[89] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. 15.

[90] For example, the 1819 and 1858 laws cited in footnote 1 set forth naming rules for certain kinds of ships. Today, 10 U.S.C. §8662(b) still requires that battleships (which the United States has not built since World War II) be named after states.

[91] *The Naval Institute Guide to the Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet*, op cit, p. 113. See also p. 70 and p. 86.

[92] Patrick Pexton, "Clinton Compromise: Carriers Truman *And* Reagan," *Navy Times*, February 13, 1995: 19. See also "Navy Announces Aircraft Carrier To Be Named For President Truman," *Associated Press*, February 2, 1995. CVN-75 had been preliminarily named the United States.

[93] The article, which reported on the ship's official naming ceremony, states the following: "[Senator] Warner recalled that he first suggested naming a carrier in the senior Bush's honor last year [i.e., in 2001], during a ceremony in Newport News to christen the [previous] carrier Ronald Reagan." (Dale Eisman, "Navy Names New Aircraft Carrier For Elder Bush," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, December 10, 2002.)

Committee. On February 15, 2012, the Navy announced that DDG-113, an Arleigh Burke (DDG-51) class destroyer, would be named *John Finn*.[94]

- Section 1012 of the FY2012 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 1540/P.L. 112-81 of December 31, 2011) expressed the sense of Congress that the Secretary of the Navy is encouraged to name the next available naval vessel after Rafael Peralta. On February 15, 2012, the Navy announced that DDG-113, an Arleigh Burke (DDG-51) class destroyer, would be named *Rafael Peralta*.[95]

The July 2012 Navy report to Congress states that

> every Secretary of the Navy, regardless of point of view [on how to name ships], is subject to a variety of outside influences when considering the best names to choose. The first among these comes from the President of the United States, under whose direction any Secretary works...
>
> Secretaries of the Navy must also consider the input of Congress.... Given the vital role Congress plays in maintaining the Navy-Marine Corps Team, any Secretary is sure to respect and consider its input when considering ships names.
>
> Sometimes, the Secretary must also balance or contend with differences of opinion between the President and Congress.[96]

The Navy suggests that congressional offices wishing to express support for proposals to name a Navy ship for a specific person, place, or thing contact the office of the Secretary of the Navy to make their support known. Congress may also pass legislation relating to ship names (see below).

Congressional Responses to Announced Navy Ship-Naming Decisions

Examples of Legislation

Congress can pass legislation regarding a ship-naming decision that has been announced by the Navy. Such legislation can express Congress's views regarding the Navy's announced decision, and if Congress so desires, can also suggest or direct the Navy to take some action. The following are three examples of such legislation:

- S.Res. 332 of the 115th Congress is an example of a measure that appears to reflect support for an announced Navy ship-naming decision. This measure, introduced in the Senate on November 15, 2017, and considered and agreed to without amendment and with a preamble by unanimous consent the same day, summarizes the military career of Hershel "Woody" Williams and commemorates the christening of ESB-4, an expeditionary sea base ship named for Williams (see "Legislative Activity in 2019").
- H.Res. 1022 of the 111th Congress is an example of a measure reflecting support for an announced Navy ship-naming decision. This measure, introduced on January 20, 2010, and passed by the House on February 4, 2010, congratulates the Navy on its decision to name a naval ship for Medgar Evers.
- H.Con.Res. 312 of the 97th Congress is an example of a measure that appears to reflect disagreement with an announced Navy ship-naming decision. This

[94] DOD News Release No. 109-12, "Navy Names Five New Ships," February 15, 2012.

[95] DOD News Release No. 109-12, "Navy Names Five New Ships," February 15, 2012.

[96] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, pp. 11-12.

measure expressed the sense of Congress that the Los Angeles (SSN-688) class attack submarine *Corpus Christi* (SSN-705) should be renamed, and that a nonlethal naval vessel should instead be named *Corpus Christi*. (Los Angeles-class attack submarines were named for cities, and SSN-705 had been named for Corpus Christi, TX.) H.Con.Res. 312 was introduced on April 21, 1982, and was referred to the Seapower and Strategic and Critical Materials subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee on April 28, 1982. On May 10, 1982, the Navy modified the name of SSN-705 to *City of Corpus Christi*.[97]

USS Portland (LPD-27)

On April 12, 2013, then-Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that LPD-27, a San Antonio (LPD-17) class amphibious ship, would be named for Portland, OR.[98] LPD-27 is to be the third Navy ship to bear the name Portland. The first, a cruiser (CA-33), was named for Portland, ME. It was commissioned into service in February 1933, decommissioned in July 1946, and maintained in reserve status until struck from the Navy list in March 1959. The second, an amphibious ship (LSD-37), was named for both Portland, ME, and Portland, OR. It was

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[97] An April 24, 1982, press report states the following:

> House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill is asking the White House to change the name of the Navy's new nuclear submarine from the USS Corpus Christi to another title less offensive to Christian groups.
>
> O'Neill, D-Mass., suggested that the submarine be renamed the "USS City of Corpus Christi."
>
> In a telephone call he initiated Thursday to Michael K. Deaver, deputy chief of staff and assistant to President [Ronald] Reagan, O'Neill said he found the name Corpus Christi to be inappropriate for a nuclear-powered warship.
>
> According to an O'Neill aide, Deaver replied that he would take the issue up with the president.
>
> The USS Corpus Christi was named for the city in Texas. Corpus Christi is Latin for body of Christ.
>
> The Ad Hoc Corpus Christi Campaign, a group consisting of various Catholic and Protestant laymen and clergy, opposed calling the submarine by its present designation.
>
> O'Neill is a Roman Catholic.
>
> Navy Secretary John F. Lehman, Jr., a Catholic, has defended the name USS Corpus Christi, saying the submarine was not named for religious purposes but for the Texas city.
>
> Other ships in the Navy's history have carried the name USS Corpus Christi. The Navy has named several of its other attack submarines after cities, for example the USS Los Angeles.
>
> (Associated Press, "O'Neill Claims 'Corpus Christi' Inappropriate As Name for Sub," *Eugene Register Guard*, April 24, 1982, accessed August 18, 2016, at https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=l7RQAAAAIBAJ&sjid=MuIDAAAAIBAJ&pg=5979%2C5358114.)

A December 30, 1982, press report states the following:

> The vessel was the subject of an intense controversy last spring when Roman Catholic and other religious leaders and peace activists objected to the original name Corpus Christi, which in Latin means "Body of Christ."
>
> President Reagan ordered the name changed [to City of Corpus Christi] over the objections of Navy Secretary John Lehman.
>
> ("Sub City of Corpus Christi to Be Commissioned Jan. 8," *New London Day*, December 30, 1982, accessed August 18, 2016, at https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=RQQhAAAAIBAJ&sjid=a3UFAAAAIBAJ&dq=city-of-corpus-christi%20submarine&pg=6072%2C6185609.)

[98] DOD Release No: 237-13, "Secretary of the Navy Names Multiple Ships," April 12, 2013. The release states: "Mabus named the future USS Portland (LPD 27) in honor of Oregon's most highly populated city."

commissioned into service in October 1970, decommissioned in October 2003, and stricken from the Naval Vessel Register in March 2004.

An April 18, 2013, press release from Senator Angus King stated that "U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King today sent a letter to Ray Mabus, the Secretary of the Navy, asking that the USS Portland [LPD-27], a new San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship named after the city of Portland, Oregon, also be named in honor of Portland, Maine, consistent with the long history and tradition of U.S. Navy ships bestowed with the name USS Portland."[99] In reply, the

[99] Press release entitled "Senators Collins, King Request Ship Be Named After Portland, ME," April 18, 2013, accessed on December 11, 2017, at https://www.king.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/senators-collins-king-request-ship-be-named-after-portland-me. The press release presents the full text of the Senators' letter to then-Secretary Mabus, which is as follows:

> Dear Secretary Mabus:
>
> On April 12, 2013, you announced that LPD 27, a new San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship, will be named the USS Portland after the city of Portland, Oregon.
>
> We were surprised that the press release did not state that the ship was also named in honor of the city of Portland, Maine. We write to ask that you clarify that the ship will also be named in honor of Portland, Maine, consistent with the long history and tradition of U.S. Navy ships bestowed with the name USS Portland.
>
> The Department of the Navy press release stated LPD 27 will be the third ship to bear the name USS Portland. The press release failed to mention that both of the previous two ships were named, in whole or in part, to honor the city of Portland, Maine. The first USS Portland (CA-33) was the lead ship of a new class of heavy cruisers. Launched in 1932, it was named after the city of Portland, Maine, and saw battle during World War II at the 1942 Battle of the Coral Sea, the Battle of Midway, and the Battle of Guadalcanal. After accruing 16 battle stars, she was decommissioned in 1946.
>
> The second USS Portland (LSD-37) was commissioned in 1970 and served until 2004. The ship was also named after the city of Portland, Maine, but it was also named after the city of Portland, Oregon. The ship's insignia incorporates the seals of both cities.
>
> The third USS Portland should continue this tradition. We understand that amphibious transport dock ships are named for major American cities, and we can assure you that Portland, Maine is the largest city in Maine and the metro area is home to one-third of Maine's entire population.
>
> Portland also has a rich naval history. South Portland is where many Liberty cargo ships were built that sustained the war effort during World War II, and 4,700 skilled shipyard workers repair Los Angeles-class and Virginia-class nuclear powered submarines one hour to the south of Portland at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Portland also has the largest port in Maine, and it is home to men and women whose livelihood relies upon the ocean and its resources, as demonstrated by the historic and bustling working waterfront.
>
> We are confident that the impressive capabilities of LPD 27 and her crew can honor Portland, Maine, without in any way reducing the simultaneous honor afforded to Portland, Oregon. In fact, part of the rich history of Portland, Oregon, is that it was named after the city in Maine. In 1845, two of the city's founders, Asa Lovejoy of Boston, and Francis Pettygrove of Portland, Maine, each wanted to name the new city after his original home town. After Pettygrove won a coin toss two out of three times, the city was named after Portland, Maine. You can view the "Portland Penny" in person at the Oregon Historical Society in downtown Portland, Oregon.
>
> We request that you clarify that the USS Portland will be named in honor of Portland, Maine, as well as Portland, Oregon. Given the history of both cities and the previous ships given the proud name of USS Portland, we are confident that you will agree that doing so will greatly contribute to the rich and storied history the USS Portland will carry with her as she and her crew defend our nation.

For a press report, see Associated Press, "Navy Asked To Fix Snub Of Portland In Ship's Name," *Boston Globe*, April 20, 2013.

Navy sent letters dated April 24, 2013, to Senators Collins and King that stated the following in part:

> In addition to [the ballistic missile submarine] USS MAINE (SSBN 743), Secretary [of the Navy Ray] Mabus recently honored the state of Marine through his naming of [the expeditionary fast transport ship] USNS MILLINOCKET (JHSV 3) [now called T-EPF 3] which was christened last weekend and will proudly represent our Nation as part of the fleet for decades to come. The Secretary of the Navy has tremendous appreciation for the state of Maine, its citizens and the incredible support provided by them to our Navy and our Nation. However, Oregon is the only state in our Nation that does not currently have a ship in the fleet named for the state, its cities or communities. Secretary Mabus named LPD 27 after Portland, Oregon, to correct that oversight and acknowledge the support and contributions made by the men and women of Portland and Oregon.[100]

As noted elsewhere in this report, on October 10, 2014, the Navy announced that it was naming the Virginia-class attack submarine SSN-793 for Oregon.

A May 21, 2016, Navy blog post about the ship's christening states that "LPD-27 will be the third Navy ship named Portland, honoring both the Oregon seaport and Maine's largest city."[101] That statement is not correct, as the Navy confirms that LPD-27 is named solely for Portland, OR.[102] A July 5, 2017, Navy News Service report states correctly that "LPD 27 is named for the city of Portland, Oregon, and follows the World War II heavy cruiser CA 33 and the amphibious ship LSD 37 as the third U.S. Navy ship to bear the name Portland."[103] LPD-27 is scheduled to be commissioned in Portland, OR, on April 21, 2018.

Legislation on Future Navy Ship-Naming Decisions

Table 3 shows past enacted provisions going back to the 100th Congress regarding future ship-naming decisions. All of these measures expressed the sense of the Congress (or of the Senate or House) about how a future Navy ship should be named.

Table 4 shows past examples of proposed bills and amendments regarding future ship-naming decisions going back to the 93rd Congress. Some of these measures expressed the sense of the Congress about how a Navy ship should be named, while others would mandate a certain name for a ship. Although few of these measures were acted on after being referred to committee, they all signaled congressional interest in how certain ships should be named, and thus may have influenced Navy decisions on these matters.

[100] Letters dated April 24, 2013, from Pamela S. Kunze, Captain, U.S. Navy, Special Assistant for Public Affairs to the Secretary of the Navy, responding on behalf of the Secretary of the Navy, to Senators Collins and King, provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, December 13, 2013.

[101] "Future USS Portland (LPD 27) Christened," *Navy Live*, May 21, 2016.

[102] Source: CRS email exchange with Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, December 13, 2017.

[103] "USS Portland (LPD 27) Successfully Completes Builder's Trials," *Navy News Service*, July 5, 2017.

Table 3. Recent Enacted Legislative Provisions

Fiscal Year	Public Law	Bill	Section	Ship	Name(s)
2013	P.L. 113-6	H.R. 933	8119 of Division C	the next available capital warship	*Ted Stevens*
2012	P.L. 112-81	H.R. 1540	1012	the next available naval vessel	*Rafael Peralta*
2011	P.L. 111-383	H.R. 6523	1022	a combat vessel	*Father Vincent Capodanno*
2007	P.L. 109-364	H.R. 5122	1012	CVN-78	*Gerald R. Ford*
2001	P.L. 106-398	H.R. 4205	1012	CVN-77	*Lexington*
1999	P.L. 105-261	H.R. 3616	1014	an LPD-17 class ship	*Clifton B. Cates*
1996	P.L. 104-106	S. 1124	1018	LHD-7	*Iwo Jima*
1996	P.L. 104-106	S. 1124	1018	LPD-17 class amphibious ships	Marine Corps battles or members of Marine Corps
1996	P.L. 104-106	S. 1124	1019	an appropriate ship	*Joseph Vittori*
1991	P.L. 101-510	H.R. 4739	1426	the next DDG-51	*Samuel S. Stratton*
1989	P.L. 100-456	H.R. 4481	1221	the next SSBN	*Melvin Price*
1989	P.L. 100-456	H.R. 4481	1222	an appropriate ship	*Bob Hope*
1989	P.L. 100-202	H.J.Res. 395	8138	CVN-74 or CVN-75	*John C. Stennis*

Source: Prepared by CRS. All of these provisions expressed the sense of the Congress (or of the Senate or House) about how a Navy ship should be named.

Table 4. Examples of Proposed Bills and Amendments

[Congress] and Bill	Ship	Proposed name(s)
[115th] S.Con.Res. 10	next nuclear powered submarine	*Los Alamos*
[113th] H.Res. 637	an appropriate Navy ship	*Clifton B. Cates*
[112th] H.Con.Res. 48	a Littoral Combat Ship	*Ypsilanti*
[112th] H.R. 1945	next available naval vessel	*Rafael Peralta*
[111th] H.Res. 1505	next appropriate naval ship	*John William Finn*
[111th] H.Res. 330	an appropriate ship	*Clifton B. Cates*
[111th] H.Con.Res. 83	CVN-79 or CVN-80	*Barry M. Goldwater*
[109th] S. 2766	CVN-78	*Gerald R. Ford*
[107th] H.Con.Res. 294	a new naval vessel	*Bluejacket*
[106th] S.Con.Res. 84	CVN-77	*Lexington*
[105th] S.Amdt. 2812 to S. 2057	LPD-17 class ship	*Clifton B. Cates*
[104th] H.J.Res. 61	CVN-76	*Ronald Reagan*
[104th] H.R. 445	CVN-76	*Harry Truman*
[104th] S.Con.Res. 62	SSN-774	*South Dakota*
[104th] S.J.Res. 17	CVN-76	*Ronald Reagan*
[104th] S.Amdt. 2277 to S. 1026	LHD-7	*Iwo Jima*

[Congress] and Bill	Ship	Proposed name(s)
[104th] S.Amdt. 2277 to S. 1026	LPD-17 class ships	famous Marine Corps battles or heroes
[104th] S.Amdt. 4350 to S. 1745	a SSN-774 class submarine	*South Dakota*
[103rd] H.R. 5283	an appropriate ship	*Joseph Vittori*
[102nd] H.Con.Res. 354	a guided missile cruiser	*Pearl Harbor*
[102nd] H.R. 6115	CVN-76	*Harry S Truman*
[100th] H.Amdt. 614 to H.R. 4264	next SSBN-726 class submarine deployed after enactment	*Melvin Price*
[100th] S.Amdt. 1354 to H.J.Res. 395	CVN-74 or CVN-75	*John C. Stennis*
[98th] H.Res. 99	an aircraft carrier	*Wasp*
[97th] H.Con.Res. 312	a nonlethal naval vessel[a]	*Corpus Christi*[a]
[97th] H.Res. 174	an aircraft carrier	*Wasp*
[97th] H.R. 4977	CVN-72	*Hyman G. Rickover*
[93rd] H.Con.Res. 386	CVN-70	*Carl Vinson*
[93rd] H.Con.Res. 387	CVN-70	*Carl Vinson*
[93rd] H.J.Res. 831	CVN-70	*Carl Vinson*

Source: Prepared by CRS.

a. H.Con.Res. 312 expressed the sense of Congress that the Los Angeles (SSN-688) class attack submarine *Corpus Christi* (SSN-705) should be renamed, and that a nonlethal naval vessel should instead be named *Corpus Christi*. (Los Angeles-class attack submarines were named for cities, and SSN-705 had been named for Corpus Christi, TX.) H.Con.Res. 312 was introduced on April 21, 1982, and was referred to the Seapower and Strategic and Critical Materials subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee on April 28, 1982. On May 10, 1982, the Navy changed the name of SSN-705 to *City of Corpus Christi*.

Legislative Activity in 2019

FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2500/S. 1790)

House (Floor Amendment)

On July 10, 2019, as part of its consideration of H.R. 2500 as reported by the House Armed Services Committee (H.Rept. 116-120 of June 19, 2019), the House agreed to En Bloc No. 1, an *en bloc* amendment that included, *inter alia*, Amendment No. 15 as printed in Part B of H.Rept. 116-143 of July 9, 2019, on H.Res. 476, providing for the consideration of H.R. 2500. The text of Amendment No. 15 is as follows (emphasis added):

> At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following new section:
>
> SEC. 1092. PROHIBITION ON NAMES RELATED TO THE CONFEDERACY.
>
> (a) Prohibition on Names Related to the Confederacy.—The Secretary of Defense may not give a name to an asset that refers to, or includes a term referring to, the Confederate States of America (commonly referred to as the "Confederacy"), including any name referring to—
>
> (1) a person who served or held leadership within the Confederacy; or
>
> (2) a city or battlefield significant because of a Confederate victory.

(b) Assets Defined.—In this section, the term "assets" includes any base, installation, facility, aircraft, **ship**, equipment, or any other property owned or controlled by the Department of Defense.

Senate (Floor Amendment)

On June 27, 2019, as part of its consideration of S. 1790 as reported by the Senate Armed Services Committee (S.Rept. 116-48 of June 11, 2019), the Senate agreed to by voice vote S.Amdt. 764 as modified and amended, an amendment in the nature of the substitute that, *inter alia*, added the following section to S. 1790:

SEC. 6016. Sense of Congress on the naming of a naval vessel in honor of Senior Chief Petty Officer Shannon Kent.

(a) Findings.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Senior Chief Petty Officer Shannon M. Kent was born in Owego, New York.

(2) Senior Chief Petty Officer Kent enlisted in the United States Navy on December 10, 2003.

(3) Senior Chief Petty Officer Kent was fluent in four languages and four dialects of Arabic.

(4) Senior Chief Petty Officer Kent served five combat tours throughout 15 years of service in the Navy.

(5) On January 16, 2019, at 35 years of age, Senior Chief Petty Officer Kent was killed in a suicide bombing in Manbij, Syria, while supporting Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve.

(6) Senior Chief Petty Officer Kent was the recipient of the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, two Joint Service Commendation Medals, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Joint Service Achievement Medal, among other decorations and awards.

(7) Senior Chief Petty Officer Kent was among the first women to deploy with Special Operations Forces and was the first female to graduate from the hard skills program for non-SEALs.

(8) Senior Chief Petty Officer Kent is survived by her husband and two children.

(b) Sense of Congress.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of the Navy should name the next available naval vessel appropriate for such name in honor of Senior Chief Petty Officer Shannon Kent.

Appendix A. Executive Summary of July 2012 Navy Report to Congress

This appendix reprints the executive summary of the July 2012 Navy report to Congress on the Navy's policies and practices for naming its ships. The text of the executive summary is as follows:

Executive Summary

This report is submitted in accordance with Section 1014 of P.L. 112-81, National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2012, dated 31 December 2011, which directs the Secretary of Defense to submit a report on "policies and practices of the Navy for naming vessels of the Navy."

As required by the NDAA, this report:

- Includes a description of the current policies and practices of the Navy for naming vessels of the Navy, and a description of the extent to which theses policies and practices vary from historical policies and practices of the Navy for naming vessels of the Navy, and an explanation for such variances;
- Assesses the feasibility and advisability of establishing fixed policies for the naming of one or more classes of vessels of the Navy, and a statement of the policies recommended to apply to each class of vessels recommended to be covered by such fixed policies if the establishment of such fixed policies is considered feasible and advisable; and
- Identifies any other matter relating to the policies and practices of the Navy for naming vessels of the Navy that the Secretary of Defense considers appropriate.

After examining the historical record in great detail, this report concludes:

- Current ship naming policies and practices fall well within the historic spectrum of policies and practices for naming vessels of the Navy, and are altogether consistent with ship naming customs and traditions.
- The establishment of fixed policies for the naming of one or more classes of vessels of the Navy would be highly inadvisable. There is no objective evidence to suggest that fixed policies would improve Navy ship naming policies and practices, which have worked well for over two centuries.

In addition, the Department of the Navy used to routinely publish lists of current type naming rules for battle force ships, and update it as changes were made to them. At some point, this practice fell into disuse, leading to a general lack of knowledge about naming rules. To remedy this problem, the Naval History and Heritage Command will once again develop and publish a list of current type naming rules to help all Americans better understand why Secretaries of the Navy choose the ship names they do. This list will be updated as required.[104]

[104] Department of the Navy, *A Report on Policies and Practices of the U.S. Navy for Naming the Vessels of the Navy*, undated but transmitted to Congress with cover letters dated July 13, 2012, p. iii.

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