Congressional Research Service
Informing the legislative debate since 1914

Navy Ship Names: Background for Congress

Updated October 14, 2020

Congressional Research Service
https://crsreports.congress.gov
RS22478

CRS REPORT
Prepared for Members and
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.

Section 1749 of the FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) (S. 1790/P.L. 116-92 of December 20, 2019) prohibits the Secretary of Defense, in naming a new ship (or other asset) or renaming an existing ship (or other asset), from giving the asset a name that refers to, or includes a term referring to, the Confederate States of America, including any name referring to a person who served or held leadership within the Confederacy, or a Confederate battlefield victory. The provision also states that "nothing in this section may be construed as requiring a Secretary concerned to initiate a review of previously named assets." Section 1749 of the House-reported FY2021 NDAA (H.R. 6395) would prohibit the public display of the Confederate battle flag on Department of Defense (DOD) property, including naval vessels. Section 377 of the Senate-reported FY2021 NDAA (S. 4049) would create a commission on the naming of DOD items, including ships, that commemorate the Confederate States of America (CSA) or any person who served voluntarily with the CSA. A July 13, 2020, press report states that Navy officials reportedly "have informally discussed renaming several ships, including the [cruiser] USS Chancellorsville, which is named after a Confederate victory, and the USNS Maury, an oceanographic survey ship named after Matthew Fontaine Maury, who served as superintendent of the U.S. Naval Observatory and later joined the Confederate Navy."

Two aircraft carriers are named for Members of Congress—USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN-70) and USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN-74). Some observers have raised the issue of whether CVN-74 should be renamed on account of Senator Stennis's positions on segregation and civil rights. A July 13, 2020, press report states that U.S. Navy officials have "discussed renaming two aircraft carriers named after Southern U.S. legislators who advocated racial segregation: the USS John C. Stennis and USS Carl Vinson. Within the military, the Stennis has been nicknamed 'Johnny Reb,' a common nickname for Confederate soldiers."

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

- SSBN-826, the first of the Navy's new **ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs)** 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.
- Of the Navy's 15 most recently named **aircraft carriers**, 10 have been 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.
- On October 7, 2020, the Navy announced that FFG-62, the first **FFG(X) frigate**, which was procured in FY2020, would be named *Constellation*, in honor of the first U.S. Navy ships authorized by Congress in 1794—the six heavy frigates *United States*, *Constellation*, *Constitution*, *Chesapeake*, *Congress*, and *President*.

- **Littoral Combat Ships (LCSs)** have been 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.

Contents

Background 1
Navy's Authority and Process for Naming Ships 1
Authority for Naming Ships 1
Process for Selecting Names 1
July 2012 Navy Report to Congress 3
Overview of Naming Rules for Ship Types 3
Rules for Ship Types Now Being Procured or Recently Procured 5
Ballistic Missile Submarines (SSBNs) 5
Attack Submarines (SSNs) 6
Aircraft Carriers (CVNs) 7
Destroyers (DDGs) 10
Frigates (FFG[X]s) 11
Littoral Combat Ships (LCSs) 12
Amphibious Assault Ships (LHAs) 12
Amphibious Ships (LPDs) 13
Oilers (TAOs) 13
Dry Cargo and Ammunition Ships (TAKEs) 14
Expeditionary Fast Transports (EPFs) 14
Expeditionary Transport Docks (ESDs) and Expeditionary Sea Bases (ESBs) 14
Towing, Salvage, and Rescue Ships (TATSs) 15
Aspects of Navy Ship Names 15
Three State Names Not Currently Being Used, Particularly *Kansas* 15
Ships Named for Living Persons 17
Ships Named for the Confederacy or Confederate Officers 19
Ships Named Several Years Before They Were Procured 24
Changes to Names of Navy Ships 26
Public's Role in Naming Ships 26
Congress's Role in Naming Ships 27
Overview of Congressional Influence on Navy Ship-Naming Decisions 27
Congressional Responses to Announced Navy Ship-Naming Decisions 29
Legislation on Future Navy Ship-Naming Decisions 32
Legislative Activity in 2020 34
FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 6395/S. 4049) 34
House 34
Senate 35
Resolution Regarding Naming a Virginia-class Submarine for Wisconsin (H.Con.Res. 120/S.Con.Res. 41) 36

Tables

Table 1. Ships Since 1973 Named for Persons Who Were Living at the Time 18
Table 2. Recent Enacted Legislative Provisions 32
Table 3. Examples of Proposed Bills and Amendments 33

Appendixes

Appendix A. Executive Summary of July 2012 Navy Report to Congress 38
Appendix B. Name Change for Ex-U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Taney* 39

Contacts

Author Information 40

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

---

[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 13, 2020, 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]

---

[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.
>
> (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).

On April 8, 2020, it was reported that then-Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Modly had planned to name SSBN-827, the second ship in the class, *Republic*, and for ships in the class to be named for "elements of the founding of America." Modly reportedly finalized this naming intention in his final days as Acting Secretary of the Navy, prior to resigning from office on April 7, 2020.[21] Following Modly's resignation, his naming intention was not immediately implemented, and his successors could come to a different decision regarding the name of the second ship and the naming rule for the class.

---

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] Ben Werner, "Navy Leaders Sink Ship Names Proposed in SECNAV Modly's Last Days," *USNI News*, April 8, 2020.

Attack Submarines (SSNs)

Virginia (SSN-774) class attack submarines[22] are being named for states. Exceptions include the following:

- On January 8, 2009, then-Secretary of the Navy Donald Winter announced that SSN-785 would be named for former Senator John Warner.[23]
- On January 9, 2014, then-Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that SSN-795 would be named for Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, who served for many years as director of the Navy's nuclear propulsion program.[24]
- On October 13, 2020, Secretary of the Navy Kenneth J. Braithwaite announced that SSN-804 would be named *Barb*, in honor of two previous U.S. Navy attack submarines that were so named, SS-220 and SSN-596.[25]

As of October 13, 2020, the Navy had announced names for all 31 Virginia-class boats procured through SSN-804, the first of the two Virginia-class boats procured in FY2020. (The second Virginia-class boat procured in FY2020 is SSN-805.)

The 28 Virginia-class boats that to date have been named for states, together with 17 Ohio (SSBN-726) class ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) and cruise missile submarines (SSGNs) named for states,[26] 1 Seawolf (SSN-21) class attack submarine named for a state (Connecticut [SSN-22]), and 1 San Antonio (LPD-17) class amphibious ship named in part for a state (New York [LPD-21]),[27] make for a total of 47 in-service or under-construction ships named for states.

---

[22] 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.

[23] 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 fully funded. (The ship was fully funded by the FY2010 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.)

[24] 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 1**, 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.

[25] U.S. Navy press release, "Secretary Names Future Destroyer, Attack Submarine," October 13, 2020. See also Mallory Shelbourne, "SECNAV Names Attack Boat After WWII USS Barb, DDG for Former SECNAV Lehman," *USNI News*, October 13, 2020.

[26] 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.

[27] As discussed below in the section on amphibious ships (LPDs), San Antonio (LPD-17) class amphibious ships are being named in part for cities and communities attacked on September 11, 2001. Three LPD-17 class ships are so named—New York (LPD-21), Arlington (LPD-24) (for the country in Virginia), and Somerset (LPD-25) (for the

Navy plans call for not retiring any of these 47 ships until FY2026, when retirements of Ohio-class boats are scheduled to begin. The Navy's shipbuilding plan, meanwhile, calls for procuring one Virginia-class boat in FY2021 (with an option for procuring a second boat in FY2021), and two Virginia-class boats per year in FY2022 and subsequent years.[28] Virginia-class boats procured in FY2021 and subsequent years would enter service in FY2027 and subsequent years.

Over the next several years, the Navy can manage the situation of having not more than 50 states for which ships can be named by making one or more additional exceptions to the Virginia-class naming rule and/or giving Virginia-class boats the same state names as the earliest-retiring Ohio-class boats.[29] Ohio-class boats, however, are currently scheduled to be retired in FY2026 and subsequent years at a rate of generally one boat per year. If the Navy continues to procure Virginia-class boats at a rate of two per year, the Navy over the longer run might need to make a larger number of exceptions to the Virginia-class naming rule and/or amend the rule.

Aircraft Carriers (CVNs)

Overview

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."[30] Of the 15 most recent aircraft carriers (those with hull numbers 67 through 81), 10 have been named for past U.S. Presidents and 2 for Members of Congress.

The Navy is currently procuring Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78) class carriers.[31] 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

---

country in Pennsylvania). The Navy's July 2012 report to Congress on the Navy's policies and practices for naming ships, however, states

> On September 7, 2002, at a memorial service in New York City, [then-]Secretary [of the Navy Gordon] England announced that LPD 21 USS would be named USS New York. On the face of it, the choice was entirely consistent with the [LPD-17] type's "American cities" [naming] convention. However, when making the announcement, Secretary England made clear that the ship's name honored far more than just a city. He named New York for the city *and* state of New York, the victims of the attacks of September 11, 2001, and for "…all the great leaders in New York who emerged after the tragic events [of 9-11]."
>
> (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. Ellipse, italics, and final bracketed portion as in original.)

[28] 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.

[29] 10 U.S.C. 8662(a) states: "Not more than one vessel of the Navy may have the same name." Interpreting the phrase "vessel of the Navy" to mean a ship that has been delivered to the Navy or commissioned into service with the Navy would permit the Navy to name Virginia-class boats under construction for states whose names are assigned to Ohio-class boats that are to be decommissioned before the Virginia-class boats in question are to be delivered or commissioned into service. Interpreting "vessel of the Navy" to refer additionally to ships that are under construction for the Navy could require the Navy to defer the official act of naming one or more Virginia-class boats that are under construction until Ohio-class boas with the same state names have been decommissioned.

[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] 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.[32] 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*.[33] 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 then-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.[34]

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.[35]

On January 20, 2020, at a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day ceremony, the Navy announced that the fourth ship in the class, CVN-81, which Congress authorized in FY2019, would be named for Ship's Cook Third Class Doris Miller, an African American enlisted sailor who in 1942 received the Navy Cross (the Navy's second-highest decoration awarded for valor in combat, following the Medal of Honor) for his actions during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.[36] Miller was the first African American sailor to receive the Navy Cross, and is recognized

---

[32] 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.

[33] "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.

[34] 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.

[35] 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.

[36] See Acting Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs, "Navy Will Name a Future Ford Class Aircraft Carrier After WWII Hero Doris Miller," Navy News Service, January 19, 2020, which states

> On Dec. 7, 1941, Miller was collecting laundry on the battleship *West Virginia* (BB-48), when the attack from Japanese forces commenced. When the alarm for general quarters sounded he headed for his battle station, an anti-aircraft battery magazine, only to discover that torpedo damage had wrecked it. Miller was ordered to the ship's bridge to aid the mortally wounded commanding officer, and subsequently manned a .50 caliber Browning anti-aircraft machine gun until he ran out of ammunition. Miller then helped move many other injured Sailors as the ship was ordered abandoned due to her own fires and flaming oil floating down from the destroyed [battleship] *Arizona* (BB-33). *West Virginia* lost 150 of its 1,500 person crew.

See also William Cole, "Navy to Name Aircraft Carrier for Pearl Harbor Hero Doris Miller," *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, January 17, 2020; Johnny Diaz, "Navy Aircraft Carrier to Be Named for Black Pearl Harbor Veteran," *New York Times*, January 18, 2020; Sam LaGrone, "Next Ford-Class Carrier to Be Named After Pearl Harbor Hero Doris Miller," *USNI News*, January 18, 2020; Laurel Wamsley, "U.S. Navy to Name Aircraft Carrier After WWII Hero Doris Miller," *NPR*, January 19, 2020; Carl Prine, "Navy's Newest

as one of the first U.S. heroes of World War II.[37] He died in 1943 aboard the escort carrier *Liscome Bay* (CVE-56) when the ship was hit by a Japanese torpedo during the Battle of Makin in the Gilbert Islands, which now constitute the main part of the country of Kiribati. CVN-81 is the first U.S. aircraft carrier to be named for an African American and the first aircraft carrier to be named in honor of a sailor for actions while serving in the enlisted ranks. It is the second Navy ship to be named for Miller; the first, FF-1091, a Knox (FF-1052) class frigate, was procured in FY1967, commissioned into service in 1973, and decommissioned in 1991.[38]

Two Carriers Named for Members of Congress—USS Carl Vinson and USS John C. Stennis

The two aircraft carriers named for Members of Congress are USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN-70), which entered service in 1982 and is scheduled to remain service until about 2032, and USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN-74), which entered service in 1995 and is scheduled to remain in service until the late 2040s. As shown in **Table 1**, both of these ships are examples of U.S. military ships that were named for persons who were living at the time the name was announced.

As shown in **Table 3**, in the 93rd Congress, provisions were proposed relating to the naming of CVN-70 for Representative Carl Vinson. As shown in **Table 2**, the 100th Congress passed an amendment relating to the naming of an aircraft carrier for Senator John Stennis. The amendment was enacted as Section 8138 of the FY1988 Department of Defense (DOD) DOD Appropriations Act, which formed part of H.J.Res. 395/P.L. 100-202 of December 22, 1987.[39] Section 8138 stated, "It is the sense of the Congress that the Secretary of Defense should name one of the new nuclear aircraft carriers appropriated in fiscal year 1988 [i.e., either CVN-74 or CVN-75] the U.S.S. JOHN C. STENNIS." As shown in **Table 1**, on June 23, 1988 (i.e., about six months after the enactment of P.L. 100-202), President Reagan announced that CVN-74 would be named for Stennis, and on December 19, 1988, the Navy officially named the ship for Stennis.

Some observers have raised the issue of whether CVN-74 should be renamed on account of Senator Stennis's positions on segregation and civil rights.[40] A July 13, 2020, press report states that U.S. Navy officials have "discussed renaming two aircraft carriers named after Southern U.S. legislators who advocated racial segregation: the USS John C. Stennis and USS Carl Vinson.

Aircraft Carrier Named in Honor of African American Hero," *Navy Times*, January 20, 2020; Jay Price, "A Military 1st: A Supercarrier Is Named After An African American Sailor," *NPR*, September 29, 2020.

[37] See also Thomas W. Cutrer and T. Michael Parrish, "How Dorie Miller's Bravery Helped Fight Navy Racism," *Navy Times*, October 31, 2019; and Marcus S. Cox, "WWII Review: Doris Miller, Pearl Harbor and the Birth of the Civil Rights Movement," *HistoryNet.com*, September 5, 2018.

[38] FF-1091 was transferred to Turkey as a hulk in 1999 and sunk as a target in a Turkish naval exercise in 2001.

[39] The provision was added to H.J.Res. 395 by S.Amdt. 1354, which was proposed by Senator Ted Stevens on December 12, 1987, and agreed to in the Senate by voice vote on the same date.

[40] See Katherine Hafner, "One of America's Aircraft Carriers Is Named for a Segregationist. Some Want to Rename it," *Virginian-Pilot*, July 1, 2020; Gina Harkins, "Navy Ship Names Could Fall Under Pentagon's New Diversity Review," *Military.com*, June 24, 2020; Geoff Ziezulewicz, "John C. Stennis Was an Ardent Segregationist. Is It Time to Change the Carrier's Name?" *Navy Times*, June 23, 2020; Bridget Naso, "Controversy Over John C. Stennis Aircraft Carrier Name," *NBC San Diego*, June 23, 2020; Reuben Keith Green, "The Case for Renaming the USS John C. Stennis," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, June 2020.

A somewhat similar issue has arisen regarding the name of the *Taney*, an ex-U.S. Coast Guard cutter that is owned by the City of Baltimore and operated there as a museum ship. For information regarding the issue of this ship's name, see **Appendix B**.

Within the military, the Stennis has been nicknamed 'Johnny Reb,' a common nickname for Confederate soldiers."[41]

For some general background information regarding changes to the names of Navy ships, see the section entitled "Changes to Names of Navy Ships" later in this report.

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)[42] include the following:

- On May 7, 2012, the Navy announced that it was naming DDG-116 for a living person,[43] Thomas Hudner.[44]
- 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.[45]
- 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.[46]
- On July 28, 2016, the Navy announced that it was naming DDG-124 for a living person, Harvey C. Barnum Jr.[47]
- On July 11, 2018, the Navy announced that it was expanding the name of the destroyer *John. S. McCain* (DDG-56) to include a living person, Senator John S. McCain III.[48]

---

[41] Michael R. Gordon, "Confederate Symbolism in the Military Stretches Far Beyond Flags, Base Names," *Wall Street Journal*, July 13, 2020. See also John Wilkens, "Racial Justice Turns to Navy Ships Named for Confederate Battles, Segregationists," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, July 26, 2020.

[42] 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.

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

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

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

[46] 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.

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

[48] The Navy announced that it 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, Navy notice 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,

- 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.[49]

As of October 13, 2020, the Navy had announced names for all DDG-51 class destroyers procured through DDG-134, one of three DDG-51s procured in FY2020, as well as DDG-137, the second of two DDG-51s requested for procurement in FY2021. In addition, on November 15, 2019, the Navy announced that it would name two additional DDG-51 class destroyers for the late former Senators Thad Cochran and Richard Lugar (both of whom served in the Navy early in their careers).[50] The Navy's announcement did not specify which two DDG-51 class ships would be so named, but given the naming of DDG-137, it is possible that these two ships will be DDG-135 and DDG-136.

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). Congress funded the procurement of the first ship in the class, FFG-62,[51] in FY2020. The Navy's FY2021 budget submission calls for the next nine to be procured during the period FY2021-FY2025 in annual quantities of 1-1-2-2-3.[52]

On October 7, 2020, the Navy announced that FFG-62 would be named *Constellation*, in honor of the first U.S. Navy ships authorized by Congress in 1794—the six heavy frigates *United States*, *Constellation*, *Constitutio*n, *Chesapeake*, *Congres*s, and *President*.[53] FFG(X)s will henceforth be known as Constellation (FFG-62) class ships. FFG-62 is the fifth Navy ship to be named *Constellation*. The Navy's announcement about the naming of FFG-62 did not make clear what the naming rule for the class will be. Since the Navy plans to procure many more than six FFG(X)s, one possibility is that the ships will be named for historic Navy ships in general.

> 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.
>
> (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.

[49] 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.

[50] Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs, "SECNAV Names Future Destroyer in Honor of Late Sen. Cochran," *Navy News Service*, November 15, 2019; Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs, "SECNAV Names Future Destroyer in Honor of Late Sen. Lugar," *Navy News Service*, November 15, 2019.

[51] The previous class of U.S. Navy frigates, the *Oliver Hazard Perry* (FFG-7) class, ended with USS *Ingraham* (FFG-61).

[52] For more on the FFG(X) program, see CRS Report R44972, *Navy Constellation (FFG-62) Class Frigate (Previously FFG[X]) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[53] Department of the Navy, "SECNAV Names Navy's Newest Class of FFG(X) Ships," October 7, 2020.

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.[54] LCSs were at first named for U.S. mid-tier cities, small towns, and other U.S. communities.[55] 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.[56]

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[57] 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.[58] 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.[59] 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).

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.[60] 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

[54] 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.

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

[56] 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.

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

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

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

[60] 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.

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.[61] The Navy reaffirmed this name selection with a more formal announcement on May 30, 2014.[62] 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.[63]

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.[64] 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.[65] 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.[66]

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,"[67] and that the first ship in the class, TAO-205, which was procured in FY2016, will be named for Representative John Lewis.[68] 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.[69]

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,

[61] 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.

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

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

[64] 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.

[65] 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.

[66] 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.

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

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

[69] 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.

and Sojourner Truth, respectively.[70] 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.[71] The Navy announced on May 18, 2011, that the 14th ship in the class would be named for civil rights activist Cesar Chavez.[72]

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.[73] As of October 13, 2020, the Navy had posted names for all EPFs through EPF-14, which was procured in FY2019.

As part of its action on the Navy's FY2020 budget, Congress provided $261 million for the procurement of another EPF, which would be EPF-15. On February 13, 2020, however, the Administration submitted a reprogramming action that transfers about $3.8 billion in DOD funding to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) counter-drug activities, commonly reported to mean the construction of the southern border wall. Included in this action was the $261 million that Congress appropriated in FY2020 for this EPF.[74]

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.

---

[70] 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.

[71] 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.

[72] 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.)

[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. 18-19.

[74] For additional discussion of this reprogramming action, see CRS Report RL32665, *Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

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, the Navy 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.[75] A fourth ESB (ESB-6) was procured in FY2018, and a fifth (ESB-7) was procured in FY2019.

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.[76] On June 21, 2019, the Navy announced that TATS-7, the second ship in the class, would be named *Cherokee Nation*.[77] 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.[78]

Aspects of Navy Ship Names

Three State Names Not Currently Being Used, Particularly *Kansas*

As noted earlier in the section on evolution over time in Navy ship-naming rules, state names were once given to battleships, then later to nuclear-powered cruisers and ballistic missile submarines, and are now being given to Virginia-class attack submarines.[79] As noted earlier in the section on names for attack submarines, as of October 5, 2020, a total of 47 in-service or under-construction Navy ships (46 of them submarines) are currently named for states.

The three states whose names are not currently being used for active Navy ships are Kansas, South Carolina, and Wisconsin. Of these, Kansas is the state for which, by far, the most time has 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. As of October 13, 2020, it has been more than 98 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.[80] The most recent ships named for the other two states—the battleship *Wisconsin* (BB-64) and the nuclear-powered cruiser *South Carolina* (CGN-37)—were decommissioned on September 30, 1991, and July 30, 1999, respectively. BB-64 is now a museum battleship in Norfolk, VA.

---

[75] "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.

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

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

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

[79] 10 U.S.C. 8662(b) states: "Each battleship 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." The Navy has not procured any new battleships (i.e., surface combatants larger than cruisers) since World War II. 10 U.S.C. 8662(b) does not prohibit the Navy from giving state names to ships other than battleships.

[80] The Littoral Combat Ship *Kansas City* (LCS-22), named for the adjacent cities of Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, KS, was procured in FY2015 and was commissioned into service on June 20, 2020. Its name was announced in July 2015 by then-Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus.

On December 23, 2019, the Navy announced that SSN-802, and SSN-803, the two Virginia-class attack submarines procured in FY2019, would be named for the states of Oklahoma and Arizona, respectively.[81] Prior to this naming announcement, Arizona and Oklahoma were the two states after Kansas for which the most time had passed since a Navy ship bearing the state's name had been in commissioned service. The previous ships named for these two states were battleships sunk in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941—the battleship *Arizona* (BB-39), which was decommissioned on December 29, 1941, following its sinking in the attack, and the battleship *Oklahoma* (BB-37), which was raised and surveyed after the attack, found to be too uneconomical to repair, and decommissioned in 1944.[82] BB-39 now serves as a memorial.

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, DOD 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."[83] 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."[84] In its announcement of November 19, 2012, that the Navy was naming the Virginia-class attack submarine SSN-791 for Delaware, DOD quoted then-Secretary Mabus as saying, "It has been too long since there has been a USS Delaware in the fleet."[85]

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."[86] 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."[87]

---

[81] Acting Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs, "Acting SECNAV Names Two Newest Virginia-Class Subs for Greatest-Gen Heroes of Pearl Harbor," *Navy News Service*, December 23, 2019.

[82] The Los Angeles (SSN-688) class attack submarine Oklahoma City (SSN-723) entered service in 1988 and will reach the end of its 33-year expected service life in 2021.

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

[84] 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.

[85] 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.

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

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

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."[88]

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, Montana, Oklahoma, and Arizona, 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; September 2, 2015, and December 23, 2019, respectively.)

As discussed earlier in the section on rules for naming attack submarines, the Navy over the next several years can manage the situation of having not more than 50 states for which ships can be named by making one or more additional exceptions to the Virginia-class attack submarine naming rule and/or giving Virginia-class boats the same state names as the earliest-retiring Ohio-class boats.[89]

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. As shown in **Table 1**, since the naming of CVN-70 for Carl Vinson in 1974, at least 22 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 3 announced in 2012 and 4 announced in 2016. In four of the six most-recent instances, the ships were named for current or former Members of Congress.

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,[90] NHHC does not believe that any ships had

[88] "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.

[89] 10 U.S.C. 8662(a) states: "Not more than one vessel of the Navy may have the same name." Interpreting the phrase "vessel of the Navy" to mean a ship that has been delivered to the Navy or commissioned into service with the Navy would permit the Navy to name Virginia-class boats under construction for states whose names are assigned to Ohio-class boats that are to be decommissioned before the Virginia-class boats in question are to be delivered or commissioned into service. Interpreting "vessel of the Navy" to refer additionally to ships that are under construction for the Navy could require the Navy to defer the official act of naming one or more Virginia-class boats that are under construction until Ohio-class boas with the same state names have been decommissioned.

[90] Although President Nixon announced on November 18, 1973, that CVN-70 would be named for Carl Vinson, as shown in **Table 1**, the name apparently was officially given to the ship on January 18, 1974.

been named for a living person by the Navy as NHHC does not have records that would indicate such.[91]

Table 1. Ships Since 1973 Named for Persons Who Were Living at the Time

Ship type	Hull number	Ship name	Date name announced	Person's age 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	*2021*
Expeditionary Sea Base	ESB-4	*Hershel "Woody" Williams*	1/14/16	92	FY2014	2018
Destroyer	DDG-120	*Carl Levin*	3/31/16	81	FY2013	*2021*
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	*2026*
Destroyer	DDG-137	*John F. Lehman*	10/13/2020	78	FY2021[d]	*2027*

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 is 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-137 is one of two DDG-51 class ships requested for procurement in FY2021.

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

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

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.

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....

[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.[92]

Ships Named for the Confederacy or Confederate Officers

Section 1749 of FY2020 NDAA

Section 1749 of the FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) (S. 1790/P.L. 116-92 of December 20, 2019) prohibits the Secretary of Defense, in naming a new ship (or other asset) or renaming an existing ship (or other asset), from giving the asset a name that refers to, or includes a term referring to, the Confederate States of America, including any name referring to a

[92] 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.

person who served or held leadership within the Confederacy, or a Confederate battlefield victory. The provision also states that "Nothing in this section may be construed as requiring a Secretary concerned to initiate a review of previously named assets."

USS Chancellorsville (CG-62) and USNS Maury (TAGS-66)

A July 13, 2020, press report states that "U.S. Navy officials have informally discussed renaming several ships, including the USS Chancellorsville, which is named after a Confederate victory, and the USNS Maury, an oceanographic survey ship named after Matthew Fontaine Maury, who served as superintendent of the U.S. Naval Observatory and later joined the Confederate Navy."[93]

A June 24, 2020, press report states

> The names of U.S. warships could face new scrutiny in coming months as the Pentagon moves forward with a military-wide effort to target racial bias and prejudice in the ranks.
>
> A Defense Department-wide review to improve inclusion and diversity will likely not only look at military installation names, but those of Navy vessels too.
>
> "While I cannot speak for these three groups of leaders who will provide recommendations to the [defense secretary], I would personally expect that at least one of these groups will make specific recommendations regarding the naming of bases and ships," Christopher Garver, a Pentagon spokesman, told Navy Times.
>
> Lisa Lawrence, a Defense Department spokeswoman, said Wednesday [June 24] that Defense Secretary Mark Esper is moving forward quickly, but deliberately, in setting up the groups that will examine military issues related to diversity.
>
> Like Army installations named for Confederate leaders, the names of at least two Navy ships have been called into question in recent weeks as the country grapples with ongoing protests for an end to racism and police brutality.
>
> Retired Lt. Cmdr. Reuben Keith Green recently laid out his case for renaming the aircraft carrier John C. Stennis in this month's U.S. Naval Institute's Proceedings magazine….[94]
>
> The nationwide debate has also resurrected questions over why the Navy has a guided-missile cruiser named for the Battle of Chancellorsville, which the Confederacy won….
>
> The name of the oceanographic survey ship Maury also has ties to the Confederacy, U.S. Naval Institute News recently noted.[95]

A June 12, 2020, press report states

> The focus nationally has been on U.S. Army bases named for Confederate military leaders, but there are also two active Navy ships connected to the Confederacy—[the] guided-missile cruiser USS *Chancellorsville* (CG-62) and [the] oceanographic survey ship USNS *Maury* (T-AGS-66).
>
> Maury, delivered in 2016, was named for Matthew Fontaine Maury. While in the U.S. Navy, Maury oversaw the Naval Observatory and was instrumental in laying the foundation of modern oceanography. Murray resigned from the U.S. Navy and served in

[93] Michael R. Gordon, "Confederate Symbolism in the Military Stretches Far Beyond Flags, Base Names," *Wall Street Journal*, July 13, 2020.

[94] The name of USS *John C. Stennis* was discussed earlier in the section on names of aircraft carriers.

[95] Gina Harkins, "Navy Ship Names Could Fall Under Pentagon's New Diversity Review," *Military.com*, June 24, 2020.

> the Confederate Navy. He spent the majority of the Civil War in Europe attempting to drum up support for the Confederacy.[96]
>
> *Chancellorsville*, commissioned in 1989, is named for the Confederate victory in 1863 by the Army of Northern Virginia led by Robert E. Lee and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson.
>
> The Ticonderoga-class of cruisers are named for American battles—including several Civil War conflicts. Unlike USS *Vicksburg* (CG-69) or USS *Mobile Bay* (CG-53), *Chancellorsville* is named for a clear Confederate victory that paved the way for the Army of Northern Virginia's invasion of Pennsylvania and the Battle of Gettysburg.
>
> The hull of the cruiser contains minié balls and shell fragments from the battle, USA Today reported in 1988. As of at least 2016, the ship's wardroom held a painting of Lee and Jackson.[97]

The Navy states that the *Chancellorsville* is

> [t]he 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.[98]

Regarding the *Chancellorsville*, a June 9, 2020, press report stated

> [A spokesman for Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday], Cmdr. Nathan Christensen, declined to comment as to whether the sea service planned to change the name of the warship Chancellorsville, commissioned in 1989 and named after a Confederate victory during the Civil War….
>
> An image on the command's official website shows an image featuring several renderings of the Confederate flag.[99]

---

[96] In addition to TAGS-66, three previous Navy ships were also named for Maury. An online biography of Matthew Fontaine Maury states: "Nicknamed 'Pathfinder of the Seas,' Matthew Fontaine Maury made important contributions to charting wind and ocean currents. His studies proved that by following the winds and currents ships could cross the ocean in fewer days than ever before…. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Maury, a Virginian, resigned his commission as a U.S. Navy commander and joined the Confederacy. He spent the war in the South, as well as abroad in England, acquiring ships for the Confederacy." (National Museum of the U.S. Navy, "Matthew Fontaine Maury [1806-1873])," published April 19, 2019, accessed June 11, 2020, at https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/museums/nmusn/education/distance-learning/to-the-ends-of-the-earth/navigation/biography—matthew-fontaine-maury.html.) See also Tim St. Onge, "Scientist of the Seas: The Legacy of Matthew Fontaine Maury," Library of Congress, July 25, 2018, accessed June 11, 2020, at https://blogs.loc.gov/maps/2018/07/scientist-of-the-seas-the-legacy-of-matthew-fontaine-maury/.

[97] Sam LaGrone, "Senate Bill to Purge Confederate Names from U.S. Military Could Affect Two Navy Ships," *USNI News*, June 12, 2020.

[98] "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.

[99] Geoff Ziezulewicz, "CNO Says No More Confederate Battle Flags in Public Spaces and Work Areas," *Navy Times*, June 9, 2020. For additional press reports about the CNO's statement, see, for example, Idrees Ali, "U.S. Navy to Bar Confederate Flags from Ships, Aircraft, Bases," *Reuters*, June 9, 2020; Robert Burns (Associated Press), "Navy Bans Display of Confederate Battle Flag as Military Leaders Consider Renaming Bases," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, June 9, 2020; Ryan Browne, "US Navy Joins Marines in Moving to Ban Confederate Battle Flag," *CNN*, June 9, 2020; Paul D. Shinkman, "Navy to Ban Confederate Flag Following Marine Corps Order," *U.S. News & World Report*, June 9, 2020; Caitlin McFall, "Navy Moves to Ban Confederate Flag," *Fox News*, June 9, 2020; Zachary Halaschak, "US Navy

Also regarding the *Chancellorsville*, 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, 2017].
>
> 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."[100]

June 9, 2020, CNO Statement Regarding Removal of Confederate Battle Flag

On June 9, 2020, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Michael Gilday, stated

> Today, I directed my staff to begin crafting an order that would prohibit the Confederate battle flag from all public spaces and work areas aboard Navy installations, ships, aircraft and submarines. The order is meant to ensure unit cohesion, preserve good order and discipline, and uphold the Navy's core values of honor, courage and commitment.[101]

Additional Background Information

A June 15, 2017, blog post states that past U.S. Navy ships that have been named for Confederate officers include

> 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

---

Moves to Ban Display of Confederate Battle Flag," *Washington Examiner*, June 9, 2020; David Martin, Jordan Freiman, and Li Cohen, "U.S. Navy to Ban All Public Displays of the Confederate Flag," *CBS News*, June 10, 2020.

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

[101] USNavyCNO, tweet of June 9, 2020, accessed June 10, 2020, at https://twitter.com/USNavyCNO/status/1270451752459010049. See also Julia Bergman, "Pressure Increases on Coast Guard to Ban Confederate Flag," *New London Day*, July 2 (updated July 3), 2020.

> 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][102] and [the harbor tug] USS Osceola (YTB-129) [commissioned 1938; sold for scrapping 1973][103] were named after American Indian leaders who fought wars against the United States.[104]

In addition to the ships mentioned above, other past Navy (USS) or Military Sealift Command (USNS) ships named for Confederate officers, as identified by one observer, include

- the destroyer *USS Buchanan* (DDG-14) (commissioned 1962; decommissioned 1991);
- the destroyer *USS Semmes* (DDG-18) (commissioned 1962; decommissioned 1991);
- the destroyer *USS Tattnall* (DDG-19) (commissioned 1963; decommissioned 1991);
- the destroyer *USS Waddell* (DDG-24) (commissioned 1964; decommissioned 1992);
- the frigate *USS Brooke* (FFG-1) (commissioned 1966; decommissioned 1988);
- the frigate *USS Richard L. Page* (FFG-5) (commissioned 1967; decommissioned 1988);

[102] 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.

[103] 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.

[104] 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.

- the oceanographic research ship *USNS Lynch* (TAGOR-7) (entered service 1965, placed out of service 1994); and
- the above-mentioned surveying ship *USNS Maury* (TAGS-66) (entered service 2016; currently in service).[105]

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.[106]

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 Admiral Arleigh Burke, several years before the ship was either authorized or appropriated.[107]

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.[108]

Recent examples of Navy ships whose names were announced more than two years before they were procured include the following:[109]

- **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

[105] Source: Emails to CRS from Steven Wills, Center for Naval Analysis, June 11 and June 22, 2020.

[106] 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.

[107] 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.

[108] 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.

[109] 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*.

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.[110]

- **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.[111] (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 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

[110] 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.

[111] 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.)

> action on the FY2016 defense budget.[112] The procurement of each ship under this contract remains subject to the availability of appropriations for that purpose.[113]

Changes to Names of Navy Ships

The names of Navy ships are sometimes changed. A June 14, 2020, press report states

> The Navy generally refrains from renaming its ships once they've entered service. Politics and social mores certainly play a part in choosing the names of new ships, and it is not unusual for a ship to be renamed one or more times prior to entering service, but it would be quite unusual for ships to be renamed in service due to changing sensitivities.
>
> Renamings usually take place because of an imperative to quickly honor a person or event. They can also accompany a change in function such as converting a ship to a different purpose or because a naming scheme for a certain class of ships might change. Other changes might be for stylistic or administrative reasons and in those cases the core names are retained even if the rendering changes. Prior to construction names have often been swapped among ships of a class for a variety of reasons, including the symbolism of building a particularly-named ship in a particular state or city.
>
> Ships acquired from private or other sources have also frequently been renamed, especially ships transferred from the US Army or US Coast Guard to naval service. Hundreds of ships transferred from other government agencies such as the Maritime Commission or the Maritime Administration have been renamed upon being acquired for US Navy service.[114]

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, DOD, 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

---

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

[113] 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."

[114] Christopher P. Cavas, "Renaming US Navy Ships," *Defense & Aerospace Report*, June 14, 2020. Regarding the names of certain Civil War-era ironclad monitors, one blog post states

> [Then-]Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles directed that new vessels being built should illustrate the pride of the American nation by having distinctly American names. As a result, many of the monitors received names of American rivers, lakes, mountains, cities or Indian tribes. This practice created a list of names that in some cases proved nearly unpronounceable. The practice nevertheless remained in place until 1869, when the new Secretary of the Navy, Adolph A. Borie, ordered the wholesale renaming of ships, often adopting new names based on classical Greek figures or gods. This practice has somewhat complicated for many the tracing of these Civil War era ships.
>
> ("Later Ironclads," USS Monitor Center at The Mariners Museum & Park, undated, accessed July 16, 2020, at https://www.monitorcenter.org/later-ironclads/.)

Navy's decision in August 2004 to name a Virginia-class submarine after the state.[115] 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.[116]

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 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).[117]

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,[118] 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)."[119]
- 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.[120]

---

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

[116] 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.

[117] 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.

[118] 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.

[119] *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.

[120] 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.

- 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.[121]
- 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 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 Committee. On February 15, 2012, the Navy announced that DDG-113, an Arleigh Burke (DDG-51) class destroyer, would be named *John Finn*.[122]
- 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*.[123]
- On June 19, 2019, Senators Todd Young and Mike Braun introduced S.Amdt. 793, an amendment to the FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act (S. 1790) expressing the sense of the Congress that the Navy should name the next DDG-51 class destroyer for the late former Senator Richard Lugar.[124] On November 13, 2019, at which point no further action on S.Amdt. 793 was recorded at Congress.gov, the Navy announced that it would name a DDG-51 class destroyer for Lugar.[125]

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....

[121] 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.)

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

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

[124] Congress.gov as of October 13, 2020, stated that the amendment was introduced by Senator Young. A press release from Senator Young's Office (Office of Senator Todd Young, "Young Announces Navy Ship to be Named in Honor of Richard G. Lugar; Naming Ceremony Nov. 18 in Indianapolis," November 13, 2019) states that the amendment was introduced by Senators Young and Braun.

[125] Source: email from Navy Office of Legislative Affairs to CRS, November 14, 2019. See also Office of Senator Todd Young, "Young Announces Navy Ship to be Named in Honor of Richard G. Lugar; Naming Ceremony Nov. 18 in Indianapolis," November 13, 2019, accessed November 14, 2019, at https://www.young.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/young-announces-navy-ship-to-be-named-in-honor-of-richard-g-lugar-naming-ceremony-nov-18-in-indianapolis.

> 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.[126]

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 2020").
- 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 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*.[127]

---

[126] 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.

[127] 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

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.[128] 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 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."[129] In reply, the

---

> 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.)

[128] 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."

[129] 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

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.[130]

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.

---

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.

[130] 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.

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."[131] That statement is not correct, as the Navy confirmed that LPD-27 is named solely for Portland, OR.[132] A July 5, 2017, Navy News Service report stated 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."[133] LPD-27 was commissioned into service on December 14, 2017.

Legislation on Future Navy Ship-Naming Decisions

Table 2 shows past enacted provisions going back to the 100th Congress regarding future ship-naming decisions. All of these measures except the first one listed were nonmandatory provisions that expressed the sense of the Congress (or of the Senate or House) about how a future Navy ship should be named.

Table 2. Recent Enacted Legislative Provisions

Fiscal Year	Public Law	Bill	Section	Ship	Name(s)
2019	P.L. 116-92	S. 1790	1749	Any ship (or other DOD asset)	Prohibition on new names referring to Confederacy
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*
1988	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 3 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

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

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

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

all signaled congressional interest in how certain ships should be named, and thus may have influenced Navy decisions on these matters.

Table 3. Examples of Proposed Bills and Amendments

[Congress] and Bill	Ship	Proposed name(s)
[116th] H.Con.Res. 120/S.Con.Res. 41	Next Virginia-class submarine	*Wisconsin*
[116th] S.Amdt. 793 to S. 1790	Next DDG-51 class ship	*Richard G. Lugar*
[116th] S.Amdt. 764 to S. 1790	next available appropriate naval vessel	*Shannon Kent*
[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*
[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	*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 2020

FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 6395/S. 4049)

House

Section 1749 of H.R. 6395 as ordered to be reported by the House Armed Services Committee (H.Rept. 116-442 of July 9, 2020) states (emphasis added)

> SEC. 1749. PROHIBITION OF PUBLIC DISPLAY OF CONFEDERATE BATTLE FLAG ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROPERTY.
>
> (a) PROHIBITION.—Except as provided in subsection (b) the Secretary of Defense shall prohibit the public display of the Confederate battle flag at all Department of Defense property.
>
> (b) EXCEPTIONS.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall not apply to—
>
> (1) a museum located on a Department of Defense installation that addresses the Civil War from a historical or educational perspective;
>
> (2) an educational or historical display depicting a Civil War battle in which the Confederate bat tle flag is present, but not the main focus of the display;
>
> (3) a State flag that incorporates the Confederate battle flag;
>
> (4) a State-issued license plate with a depiction of the Confederate battle flag; or
>
> (5) a grave site of a Confederate soldier.
>
> (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:
>
> (1) The term ''Confederate battle flag'' means the battle flag carried by Confederate armies during the Civil War.
>
> (2) **The term ''Department of Defense property'' means** all installations, workplaces, common access areas, and public areas of the Department of Defense, including—
>
> (A) office buildings, facilities, **naval vessels**, aircraft, Government vehicles, hangars, ready rooms, conference rooms, individual offices, cubicles, storage rooms, tool and equipment rooms, workshops, break rooms, galleys, recreational areas, commissaries, Navy and Marine Corps exchanges, and heads;
>
> (B) sensitive compartmented information facilities and other secure facilities;
>
> (C) open-bay barracks and common areas of barracks and living quarters;
>
> (D) all Department of Defense school houses and training facilities including, officer candidate school, the basic school, recruit training command, and recruiting offices;
>
> (E) all areas of the Department of Defense in public or plain view, including outside areas, work office buildings, stores, or barracks, including parking lots;
>
> (F) the front yard or external porch of Government-owned and Government-operated housing and public-private venture housing; and
>
> (G) automobile bumper stickers, clothing, and other apparel that is located on or in any installation, workplace, common-access area, or public area of the Department of Defense.

Senate

Section 377 of S. 4049 as reported by the Senate Armed Services Committee (S.Rept. 116-236 of June 24, 2020) states (emphasis added)

> SEC. 377. Commission on the naming of items of the Department of Defense that commemorate the Confederate States of America or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America.
>
> (a) Removal.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall implement the plan submitted by the commission described in paragraph (b) and remove all names, symbols, displays, monuments, and paraphernalia that honor or commemorate the Confederate States of America (commonly referred to as the "Confederacy") or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America from all assets of the Department of Defense.
>
> (b) In general.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish a commission relating to assigning, modifying, or removing of names, symbols, displays, monuments, and paraphernalia to assets of the Department of Defense that commemorate the Confederate States of America or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America.
>
> (c) Duties.—The Commission shall—
>
> (1) assess the cost of renaming or removing names, symbols, displays, monuments, or paraphernalia that commemorate the Confederate States of America or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America;
>
> (2) develop procedures and criteria to assess whether an existing name, symbol, monument, display, or paraphernalia commemorates the Confederate States of America or person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America;
>
> (3) recommend procedures for renaming assets of the Department of Defense to prevent commemoration of the Confederate States of America or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America;
>
> (4) develop a plan to remove names, symbols, displays, monuments, or paraphernalia that commemorate the Confederate States of America or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America from assets of the Department of Defense, within the timeline established by this Act; and
>
> (5) include in the plan procedures and criteria for collecting and incorporating local sensitivities associated with naming or renaming of assets of the Department of Defense.
>
> (d) Membership.—The Commission shall be composed of eight members, of whom—
>
> (1) four shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense;
>
> (2) one shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;
>
> (3) one shall be appointed by the Ranking Member of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;
>
> (4) one shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives; and
>
> (5) one shall be appointed by the Ranking Member of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.
>
> (e) Appointment.—Members of the Commission shall be appointed not later than 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(f) Initial meeting.—The Commission shall hold its initial meeting on the date that is 60 days after the enactment of this Act.

(g) Briefings and reports.—Not later than October 1, 2021, the Commission shall brief the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives detailing the progress of the requirements under subsection (c). Not later than October 1, 2022, and not later than 90 days before the implementation of the plan in subsection (c)(4), the Commission shall present a briefing and written report detailing the results of the requirements under subsection (c), including:

(1) A list of assets to be removed or renamed.

(2) Costs associated with the removal or renaming of assets in subsection (g)(1).

(3) Criteria and requirements used to nominate and rename assets in subsection (g)(1).

(4) Methods of collecting and incorporating local sensitivities associated with the removal or renaming of assets in subsection (g)(1).

(h) Funding.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated $2,000,000 to carry out this section.

(2) OFFSET.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by the Act for fiscal year 2021 for Operations and Maintenance, Army, sub activity group 434 - other personnel support is hereby reduced by $2,000,000.

(i) Assets defined.—**In this section, the term "assets" includes any** base, installation, street, building, facility, aircraft, **ship**, plane, weapon, equipment, or any other property **owned or controlled by the Department of Defense**.

(j) Exemption for grave markers.—Shall not cover monuments but shall exempt grave markers. Congress expects the commission to further define what constitutes a grave marker.

Resolution Regarding Naming a Virginia-class Submarine for Wisconsin (H.Con.Res. 120/S.Con.Res. 41)

H.Con.Res. 120/S.Con.Res. 41, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the Secretary of the Navy should name the next Virginia-class submarine of the United States Navy the "USS Wisconsin," was introduced in the House on October 2, 2020, and in the Senate on July 23, 2020. The text of S.Con.Res. 41 is as follows (the text of H.Con.Res. 120 is similar, except that the final line states "(the Senate concurring)"):

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress that the Secretary of the Navy should name the next Virginia-class submarine of the United States Navy the ''USS Wisconsin''.

Whereas Wisconsin has a rich and historical connection to the United State Navy, evidenced particularly by the fact that the submarine fleet of the United States Navy produced 28 freshwater submarines for the World War II war effort;

Whereas the first USS Wisconsin (BB–9) was an 11,565-ton Illinois-class battleship that was commissioned in 1901, sailed as the flagship of both the Pacific Squadron and Asiatic Fleet, and went on to sail in the Great White Fleet that circumnavigated the globe;

Whereas the USS Wisconsin (BB–64), commonly known as ''Big Wisky'' and ''the Last Battleship'', was commissioned in 1944 and served in every major conflict until its

decommissioning in 1991, including World War II, the Korean War, and the Persian Gulf War;

Whereas the USS Wisconsin (BB–64) continues to play a vital role in educating visitors to Hampton Roads, Virginia, about the famed history of the ship;

Whereas individual citizens of Wisconsin have played a crucial role in the history of the United States Navy, including—

(1) Admiral Marc A. Mitscher, who was one of the first aviators of the United States Navy and was born in Hillsboro, Wisconsin; and

(2) Green Bay native Vice Admiral James H. Flatley, Jr., who was a key figure in the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Guadalcanal campaign;

Whereas 63 citizens of Wisconsin have been recipients of a Medal of Honor, including 10 citizens of Wisconsin who have received a Medal of Honor from the Department of the Navy; and

Whereas there has not been a USS Wisconsin in service for nearly 3 decades: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the Secretary of the Navy should name the next Virginia-class submarine of the United States Navy the ‘‘USS Wisconsin’’.

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 these 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.[134]

[134] 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.

Appendix B. Name Change for Ex-U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Taney*

A July 1, 2020, press report about the name of the *Taney*—an ex-U.S. Coast Guard cutter that is owned by the City of Baltimore and operated there as a museum ship—states

> The historic Coast Guard cutter the "Taney" will be renamed as soon as possible so that it no longer pays tribute to the antebellum Supreme Court chief justice who delivered the Dred Scott decision, according to a Baltimore museum in charge of the ship.
>
> The ship is named after Roger B. Taney, the former chief justice of the Supreme Court who delivered the Dred Scott decision in 1857 that cemented the legality of slavery.
>
> "The time is now to fix these things. We can't keep living with these symbols of oppression and blatant racism," said Chris Rowsom, executive director of Historic Ships in Baltimore, the organization that controls and maintains the ship. Its name has drawn protests and objections in the past.…
>
> Historic Ships is working with Baltimore, the Coast Guard and the National Park Service, which maintains the National Register of Historic Places, to speed removal of the Taney name and find a suitable new name for the ship. "Taney" has already been removed from the ship's stern, and Historic Ships said that until a new name is decided upon, the ship will be known by its technical name, the WHEC 37.[135] Historic Ships said it doesn't anticipate any legal roadblocks to changing the name.
>
> "We'd like to consider Thurgood Marshall," said James Piper Bond, CEO of the Living Classrooms Foundation, parent group of Historic Ships, referring to the first black Supreme Court justice and Baltimore native.
>
> Baltimore City Council President Brandon Scott said the city has been talking about removing the name for years.
>
> "The argument that changing the name would erase history is moot," he said in a statement. "Renaming the USCGC Taney is a small, but meaningful step towards an honest and necessary reckoning with our past."
>
> Baltimore Mayor Bernard "Jack" Young said in a statement he strongly believes the name should be changed.
>
> The Taney is the last warship afloat that was at Pearl Harbor during the December 7, 1941, surprise attack. The Taney was decommissioned on Dec. 7, 1986, and the Coast Guard transferred ownership and oversight to Historic Ships in Baltimore, according to Coast Guard spokesman Lt. Cdr. Scott McBride.
>
> "To preserve the proud naval heritage of the ship and honor all who served aboard during its 50 years of service, the Coast Guard recommends referring to the vessel by its hull classification symbol of WHEC 37," he said.
>
> The former Coast Guard cutter now sits docked in Baltimore's Inner Harbor as a floating memorial and museum.

[135] In the designation WHEC 37, W means it was a Coast Guard vessel, HEC means it was a high-endurance cutter, and 37 means it was the Coast Guard's 37th such ship.

Historic Ships hasn't determined if it will remove all Taney references inside the ship and place artifacts in storage or a museum but said remaining references can be used to bolster education programs on Mr. Taney's legacy.[136]

Author Information

Ronald O'Rourke
Specialist in Naval Affairs

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.

[136] Ben Kesling, "Historic Coast Guard Ship 'Taney' to Be Renamed," *Wall Street Journal*, July 1, 2020. See also Hallie Miller, "Roger B. Taney's Name Removed from Historic Pearl Harbor Ship in Baltimore," *Baltimore Sun*, July 2, 2020; "Name of Ex-Supreme Court Justice Taken Off Historic Warship," *Associated Press*, July 1, 2020; John Kruzel, "Custodians Rename Coast Guard Ship Named After Justice Who Wrote Dred Scott Decision," *The Hill*, July 1, 2020; Meg Walburn Viviano, "Name-Dropping: Coast Guard Cutter Taney's Name Removed," *Chesapeake Bay Magazine*, July 1, 2020; "Supreme Court Justice's Name Removed from Retired Coast Guard Cutter," *Maritime Executive*, July 1, 2020; "Commitment to Removing National Symbols of Racism and Educating Youth about our Nation's History Leads Living Classrooms Foundation to Remove Roger B. Taney's Racist Legacy from Former Coast Guard Cutter in Baltimore," Living Classrooms Foundation, July 1, 2020.