

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 11, 2021

The Honorable Joe Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

As America's military continues to shift focus from asymmetrical threats to challenges from near-peer competitors, including Russia and China, and you align your budgetary priorities to reflect these new challenges, we urge your Administration to promote a budget which strengthens our Navy's ability to protect America's sizeable maritime interests.

In order to strengthen, maintain, and modernize America's fleet and protect these interests, we ask that you prioritize funding in your Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 budget for the Navy's Shipyard Optimization and Improvement Plan (SIOP). As you may know, the SIOP is the Navy's twenty-year, \$21-billion plan to optimize and modernize the U.S. Navy's four public shipyards— Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility, and Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility. All nuclear repair and retrofit work are completed at these four public shipyards. Thus, the shipyards serve a critical role in ensuring our national defense; the SIOP ensures they can meet the requirements of our growing active fleet. The plan also includes several critical improvements including dry dock recapitalization, facility layout and optimization, and capital equipment modernization.

At its height after World War II, the U.S. Navy operated 11 shipyards across the country with facilities from California to New York. Following the war, naval shipyards largely moved away from new construction and focused their efforts on maintaining ships of the fleet. Shipyard closures occurred frequently under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process during the 1990s, shrinking the number of government-owned shipyards to four.

Over the course of many years, lack of adequate funding and the Navy's focus on prioritizing operations has resulted in aging and substandard facilities, utilities, dry docks, equipment, and information technology infrastructure at all four naval shipyards. This impacts work efficiencies and results in greater maintenance costs, reliability issues, and cyber vulnerabilities. The six percent minimum infrastructure investment required of the Navy by law is only sufficient to prevent further degradation in mission-essential facilities. Without the crucial investments laid out in the SIOP, the naval shipyards will be unable to meet future maintenance needs for our nuclear assets including our aircraft carriers and submarines.

In addition to prioritizing funding for the SIOP, we urge the administration to engage the local shipyard work forces to determine the best overall solution for modernization and optimization of the shipyards. Each shipyard has unique knowledge of their existing facilities, workforce, and challenges that should be leveraged in designing the facilities that they will continue to work in for the decades to come. A "one-

size-fits-all” solution, while less costly in the short term, may not deliver the best results for the Navy or the communities in the long run.

Congress has consistently supported the budget requests for the SIOP from the Navy, and we are eager to make sure that as we transition from the research and planning stages into the execution phase, the Navy has the resources needed to complete each critical step in the SIOP. We respectfully request that you ensure the projected SIOP funds remain consistent and predictable and support funding for the SIOP in your FY2022 budget and in future years.

We appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress

Ed Case  
Member of Congress

Robert C. “Bobby” Scott  
Member of Congress

Elaine Luria  
Member of Congress