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CO-CHAIR, CONGRESSIONAL
SHIPBUILDING CAUCUS

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January 20, 2010

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman,
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As we begin the second session of the 111th Congress and the committee schedules its oversight hearings, we are writing to request that you include a hearing on the U.S. Navy's 30-year shipbuilding plan. We believe a full committee hearing on this topic would be extremely beneficial for Congress and the American people once the Department of Defense and U.S. Navy provide to Congress the 30-year shipbuilding plan for Fiscal Year 2011.

Decisions that Congress makes on shipbuilding this year could significantly affect future U.S. military national security capabilities, Navy funding requirements, and the national shipbuilding industrial base. As you are well aware, Congress authorized and appropriated FY 2010 funding without a shipbuilding plan. Therefore, we believe a hearing on this topic during the second session of the 111th Congress can help provide many unanswered questions we lacked data for during last year's hearings and budget decisions.

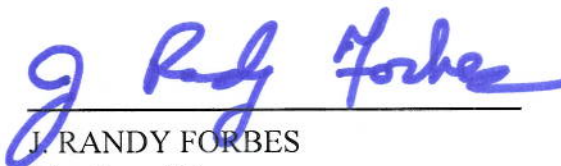
We have deep concerns about the status of Navy shipbuilding and the potential capabilities and size of the future fleet. With many year-to-year changes in Navy shipbuilding plans and significant cost growth and other problems building new Navy ships, we are not certain the Navy will be able to afford its long-range shipbuilding plans. Furthermore, we are concerned about the maintenance costs for ensuring the sound material condition of existing ships that will enable the Navy to utilize existing ships for their full planned service lives.

Mr. Chairman, we commend you on your continued successful leadership of the committee and your enduring support for our men and women in uniform. We look forward to working with you and the other members of the committee on this critical national security issue.

Sincerely,



ROBERT J. WITTMAN
Member of Congress



J. RANDY FORBES
Member of Congress



DUNCAN HUNTER
Member of Congress



TOM ROONEY
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Howard "Buck" McKeon, Ranking Member
The Honorable Gene Taylor
The Honorable Todd Akin