

MIKE ROGERS, ALABAMA, CHAIRMAN  
JOE WILSON, SOUTH CAROLINA  
MICHAEL R. TURNER, OHIO  
DOUG LAMBORN, COLORADO  
ROBERT J. WITTMAN, VIRGINIA  
AUSTIN SCOTT, GEORGIA  
SAM GRAVES, MISSOURI  
ELISE M. STEFANIK, NEW YORK  
SCOTT DESJARZ, TENNESSEE  
TRENT KELLY, MISSISSIPPI  
MIKE GALLAGHER, WISCONSIN  
MATT GAETZ, FLORIDA  
DON BACON, NEBRASKA  
JIM BANKS, INDIANA  
JACK BERGMAN, MICHIGAN  
MICHAEL WALTZ, FLORIDA  
LISA C. McCLAIN, MICHIGAN  
RONNY JACKSON, TEXAS  
PAT FALLON, TEXAS  
CARLOS A. GIMENEZ, FLORIDA  
NANCY MACE, SOUTH CAROLINA  
BRAD FINSTAD, MINNESOTA  
DALE W. STRONG, ALABAMA  
MORGAN LUTTRELL, TEXAS  
JENNIFER A. KIGGANS, VIRGINIA  
NICK LALOTA, NEW YORK  
JAMES C. MOYLAN, GUAM  
MARK ALFORD, MISSOURI  
CORY MILLS, FLORIDA  
RICHARD MCCORMICK, GEORGIA  
LANCE GOODEN, TEXAS

CHRIS VIESON, STAFF DIRECTOR

## COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

ADAM SMITH, WASHINGTON,  
RANKING MEMBER  
JOE COURTNEY, CONNECTICUT  
JOHN GARAMENDI, CALIFORNIA  
DONALD NORCROSS, NEW JERSEY  
RUBEN GALLEGO, ARIZONA  
SETH MOULTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
SALUD O. CARBAJAL, CALIFORNIA  
RO KHANNA, CALIFORNIA  
BILL KEATING, MASSACHUSETTS  
ANDY KIM, NEW JERSEY  
CHRISSEY HOULAHAN, PENNSYLVANIA  
ELISSA SLOTKIN, MICHIGAN  
MIKIE SHERRILL, NEW JERSEY  
VERONICA ESCOBAR, TEXAS  
JARED F. GOLDEN, MAINE  
SARA JACOBS, CALIFORNIA  
MARILYN STRICKLAND, WASHINGTON  
PATRICK RYAN, NEW YORK  
JEFF JACKSON, NORTH CAROLINA  
GABE VASQUEZ, NEW MEXICO  
CHRISTOPHER R. DELUZZIO, PENNSYLVANIA  
JILL N. TOKUDA, HAWAII  
DONALD G. DAVIS, NORTH CAROLINA  
JENNIFER L. McLELLAN, VIRGINIA  
TERRI A. SEWELL, ALABAMA  
STEVEN HORSFORD, NEVADA  
JIMMY PANETTA, CALIFORNIA  
MARC A. VEASEY, TEXAS

BRIAN GARRETT, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

January 17, 2024

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

Dear President Biden,

We, the undersigned, are writing to you as a bipartisan coalition that supported advancement of the recently enacted Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). One of the most significant provisions of the new law are several authorities to enable execution of the trilateral AUKUS security agreement amongst the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

The intent of this historic enterprise, which your administration initiated, is aimed at preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific by rebalancing the deteriorating security environment in the region. In particular, the centerpiece of those authorities in the NDAA is authorization to sell three Virginia-class submarines to the Government of Australia as they recapitalize their Navy in the coming years. Now that AUKUS is codified, we are writing to express our conviction that the U.S. Navy and Congress maintain continued procurement of two Virginia-class submarines per year, as detailed in the Navy's FY2024 30-Year Shipbuilding Plan.

Our belief is based on the promising increase in U.S. submarine production tonnage in 2023. Part of this growth is due to investments from the Navy and Congress in workforce and supply chain development over the last five years, which requires continuous support to mature and stabilize the health of the industrial base. Even more importantly, this growth is dependent on the persistent two-per-year demand signal to the nationwide submarine industrial base that Congress has defended since 2011. That commitment has driven suppliers to make critical capital investments and expand capacity based on a predictable forecast in expected work. It has also driven metal trades workers, designers, and engineers to choose shipbuilding as promising careers in record numbers. Deviation from projected procurement rates in the FY2025 budget request would upend the faith of a steady procurement profile in the Future Years Defense Plan by our suppliers, as well as any plans for future capital investments in the supply chain.

In March 2023, the joint announcement of the AUKUS Optimal Pathway by the heads of government of the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom triggered a robust

discussion in Congress that generated significant support and increased international attention to the critical need for, and challenges facing, the Virginia-class program. The AUKUS partnership relies on our nation to sustain a consistent build rate for attack submarines required to fulfill our obligation to successfully transfer, via sale, Virginia-class submarines to Australia while meeting our own force structure requirements. It is imperative to maintain a steady two-per-year procurement rate to assure our partners in our ability to meet commitments and address concerns about our nation's undersea capabilities.

Simply put, now is not the time to insert instability in the supply chain with uncertainty in procurement rates. The FY2025 budget will come at a pivotal time for the Virginia-class submarine program and sustaining our unmatched edge in the undersea domain. Any deviation from the planned cadence of the construction and procurement of two submarines per year will reverberate both at home and abroad, with allies and competitors alike.

Thank you for your consideration of our views, and we look forward to supporting needed and steady investments in our attack submarine program.

Sincerely,



Mike Rogers  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee



Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee



Trent Kelly  
Chairman  
Seapower and Projection  
Forces Subcommittee



Joe Courtney  
Ranking Member  
Seapower and Projection  
Forces Subcommittee