

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 13, 2023

Honorable Carlos Del Toro
Secretary of the Navy
Department of the Navy
100 Navy Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Del Toro:

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), signed into law on December 23, 2022, requires the Navy to maintain not less than 31 amphibious warfare ships, at least 10 of which must be amphibious assault ships (LHAs). The Navy's FY2024 budget and 30-year shipbuilding plan make it clear the Navy does not have a plan to meet this legal requirement, now or over the next 30 years. We note that the Senate Armed Services Committee received the most recent 30-year shipbuilding plan nearly four months after the FY2023 NDAA was signed into law, and less than 24-hours before the Department of the Navy's April 18, 2023 testimony, giving committee members and staff little time to review the plan and ask relevant oversight questions.

During your April 18, 2023 testimony before the Committee, a bipartisan group of Senators asked you about the Navy's failure to comply with the statutory requirement to maintain at least 31 amphibious warfare ships. You committed to come back to the Committee with a plan to adhere to the law. Specifically, you stated:

"Senator, you have my commitment that I will come back to you with a statement on how we can fix this."

At this time, you have not yet contacted the Committee to follow through on your commitment. As we reiterated during the hearing, the statutory requirement for the Navy to maintain 31 amphibious warfare ships is not a suggestion, but a requirement based on the assessed needs of the Navy and Marine Corps. The Navy's current plan not only violates the statutory requirement, but also jeopardizes the future effectiveness of the Joint Force, especially as we consider national security threats in the Indo-Pacific.

We request that you provide the Committee an updated shipbuilding plan no later than June 19, 2023. Alternatively, we request that you submit a plan to adhere to the statutory requirement before that date.

Sincerely,



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator



Mazie Hirono
United States Senator



Tom Cotton
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



Tommy Tuberville
United States Senator



Ted Budd
United States Senator



Eric Schmitt
United States Senator



M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



Rick Scott

United States Senator



Markwayne Mullin

United States Senator



Joe Manchin III

United States Senator



Deb Fischer

United States Senator