

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1173

Encouraging the Department of Defense and the Department of the Navy to enter into an international joint-build, cost-sharing program for the next generation nuclear-powered fast attack submarine program, and encouraging the Department of the Navy to maximize the utility of autonomous underwater vehicles.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 10, 2018

Mr. CONAWAY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

RESOLUTION

Encouraging the Department of Defense and the Department of the Navy to enter into an international joint-build, cost-sharing program for the next generation nuclear-powered fast attack submarine program, and encouraging the Department of the Navy to maximize the utility of autonomous underwater vehicles.

Whereas according to the National Defense Strategy, “. . . an increasingly complex global security environment, characterized by overt challenges to the free and open international order and the re-emergence of long-term, strategic competition between nations. These changes require a clear-eyed appraisal of the threats we face, acknowledgement of the changing character of warfare, and

a transformation of how the Department conducts business.”;

Whereas according to the National Defense Strategy, one defense objective is “. . . ensuring common domains remain open and free”;

Whereas the undersea domain is vital to national security and freedom of the seas;

Whereas the ability of the United States to protect its national security in the undersea domain is in increasing jeopardy;

Whereas former Combatant Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command Harry Harris said before Congress in 2018, “Potential adversary submarine activity has tripled from 2008 levels, requiring an increase of U.S. activity to maintain undersea superiority”;

Whereas the Navy does not have enough nuclear-powered fast attack submarines (commonly known as “SSNs”) to fulfill national security requirements today;

Whereas United States Los Angeles class SSNs are being retired in a larger number than the current Virginia class replacement due to budget and build limitations;

Whereas former Combatant Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command Harry Harris said before Congress in 2018, “This growth of regional submarine fleets, and increasing demand from other Combatant Commands for SSNs, will challenge the Joint Force to address our SSN requirements in the decade ahead. The SSN imbalance will only be aggravated as the global U.S. Navy SSN inventory drops and submarines are retired faster than replacements are constructed.”;

Whereas the number of SSNs will continue to decline to a projected minimum of 42 in 2028;

Whereas the Navy will not reach the stated inventory SSN requirement of 66 until 2048;

Whereas according to the fiscal year 2019 shipbuilding plan, to reach the goal of 66 SSNs, the Navy will begin to purchase the SSN(X) far in the future, in 2034;

Whereas according to the Congressional Budget Office, the projected cost of each SSN(X) according to certain requirements will be \$5,500,000,000 per submarine;

Whereas Congress supports the Navy's design goal in the Tactical Submarine Evolution Plan of a "fast, lethal, next-generation attack submarine";

Whereas Congress has significant concerns regarding declining SSN inventory numbers and its adverse implication for national security;

Whereas Congress has significant concerns regarding SSN(X)'s future cost projections and the impact on other Navy budget programs;

Whereas to fill a growing national security need, Congress believes new, innovative ideas must be pursued in order to offset SSN costs and build constraints while growing the SSN fleet to adequate numbers;

Whereas the Navy is developing a nascent extended range unmanned vehicle and plans to award a contract for the first five vessels in fiscal year 2019;

Whereas a key objective of the National Defense Strategy is "defending allies from military aggression and bolstering partners against coercion, and fairly sharing responsibilities for common defense"; and

Whereas the National Defense Strategy states “mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to our strategy, providing a durable, asymmetric strategic advantage that no competitor or rival can match”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) encourages the Department of Defense and
3 the Department of the Navy to enter into an inter-
4 national joint-build, cost-sharing program for the
5 next generation nuclear-powered fast attack sub-
6 marine program (commonly known as SSN(X))
7 along the following guidelines:

8 (A) In partnership with the nations of
9 Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the
10 United Kingdom.

11 (B) To initiate, develop, agree, and enter
12 into such a program before the termination of
13 fiscal year 2021 in order to begin to build at
14 the soonest possible time; and

15 (2) encourages the Department of the Navy to
16 maximize the utility of autonomous underwater vehi-
17 cles as a method to augment capabilities, reduce re-
18 quirements, and reduce costs associated with
19 SSN(X).

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