

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 24, 2010

The Honorable Raymond E. Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
Room 4E686, The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We write to respectfully urge you to do all that you can to move to completion of several major contract actions between the Navy and Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding.

As you know, the Congress has authorized and appropriated \$4.825 billion through fiscal years 2009 and 2010 for the construction of ships which the Navy has determined will be built at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding's Gulf Coast shipyards. While contract negotiations are currently underway to obligate a significant portion of these funds, the Navy has not yet issued requests for proposals (RFPs) for procurement of long-lead items for DDG 114 and LHA 7—amounts totaling \$927 million.


We are aware that there are differences between the amounts submitted by Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding and the price the Navy is willing to pay. Like you, we too want to ensure that the Navy gets the most capable, highest quality ships at the best price. By completing action on these ship contracts, the Navy will bring needed stability and predictability to the shipbuilding work force on the Gulf Coast—which should lower the cost of building these and future ships. In these uncertain times, we feel that it makes sense from an economic and national security standpoint to move forward on getting these ships under contract.

Accordingly, we ask that you continue to diligently work with Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding to resolve these issues. In a similar fashion, we have communicated our desire for a quick resolution to the ongoing contract negotiations to the leadership of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding.

We would welcome an opportunity for you to update us in the near future on your progress in addressing these matters.

Sincerely,


THAD COCHRAN
U.S. Senator


ROGER WICKER
U.S. Senator


GENE TAYLOR
Member of Congress