
Shipbuilding Caucus, Industry Representatives Seek Solutions to Shrinking Fleet

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During a discussion among members of Congress, presidents of the Big Six shipyards, shipbuilding labor representatives, and major ship system and component manufacturers from across the country, the group outlined the threats facing the Nation if our naval fleet and shipbuilding industry continue to decline.

Shipbuilding Caucus co-chairs Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis (R-VA) and Congressman Gene Taylor (D-MS) were joined by Congressmen Tom Allen (D-ME), Rodney Alexander (R-LA), Jim Langevin (D-RI), Mike Michaud (D-ME), Bobby Scott (D-VA), Rob Simmons (R-CT), and Joe Wilson (R-SC) for the third official Caucus meeting.

At the meeting, Taylor, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, emphasized the threat of China's growing naval fleet to the world's sea-lanes. He reiterated that, if the U.S. fleet continues on its current path, the reduced number of ships could compromise the Nation's position as premier naval power in the world.

Davis assured Conference attendees that the Caucus is leading the charge to increase the fiscal year 2006 shipbuilding budget by \$984 million. She also indicated that the Caucus is crafting legislation to limit Department of Defense leasing of foreign-built ships to two years.

Caucus members pledged to work together with the shipbuilding industry to guarantee national security by increasing the size of our naval fleet and strengthening the health of the shipbuilding industry.

Both Davis and Taylor urged industry representatives to encourage their members of Congress to join the Shipbuilding Caucus, which currently has 71 members from across 27 states.

Davis and Taylor founded the Caucus in January 2005 as a forum for members of Congress to discuss the shipbuilding issues that impact their districts. The Caucus enables members to work together in a unified effort to support increased shipbuilding efforts for a strong Navy, capable of protecting America's vital national interests for years to come.