

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 7, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Defense  
122 Dirksen  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairwoman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Defense  
H-405 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Defense  
115 Dirksen  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Defense  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman Granger, Vice Chairman Durbin, and Ranking Member Visclosky:

As you work to complete the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Defense Appropriations bill, I am writing to respectfully request the inclusion of funding for three Littoral Combat Ships (LCS).

Your committees have shown tremendous support to the LCS program in previous years, resulting in production efficiencies that have driven down costs and accelerated delivery to the U.S. Navy of the technologically advanced and affordable ships required to deter and win future conflicts. To meet the demands of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and make progress toward a 355-ship fleet, it is essential to continue that support by funding three LCS in FY19. Doing so will also help revitalize American shipbuilding and manufacturing, strengthen the defense industrial base, and preserve American jobs.

The LCS is a fast, agile, focused-mission platform designed to defeat threats such as mines, quiet diesel submarines and fast surface craft, and capable of operations in near-shore and open-ocean environments. Mission flexibility allows the LCS to perform solo littoral patrol missions, joint operations with allied navies and in high-end threat scenarios as part of a larger networked and distributed battle force. Lethality and survivability upgrades continue to be added while the program has seen overall enhanced performance, including successful operational deployments, downward cost trends, and improved production schedules. Finally, positive reforms to LCS crewing, training, maintenance, and operations have positioned the program for future success.

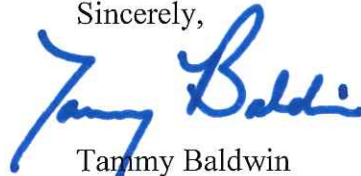
As our Nation looks to increase its naval strength, even the most optimistic future fiscal scenarios will include budget constraints that will influence decisions on the appropriate size and composition of the fleet. The affordable price of the LCS (less than one-third of the cost of a

DDG-51) provides the capacity and capability the Navy needs to support its global mission requirement during a time of limited resources. That critical balance between cost and capability will be needed to achieve President Trump's goal of a 355-ship fleet and to meet the growing operational demands of Combatant Commanders. Furthermore, the LCS plays a key role in executing the National Defense Strategy's emphasis on great power competition: the LCS supports the Navy's concept of distributed lethality; provides the forward presence needed to reassure and integrate with allies, deter adversaries through denial, and ensure freedom of navigation and maritime commerce; and allows higher-end combatants to focus on operations in the most contested environments.

Finally, funding three LCS in FY19 would help maintain the highly-skilled workforces at two American shipyards and throughout the program's supply chain, which will ensure continued competition and drive down costs in the Guided Missile Frigate acquisition.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your work on behalf of the men and women of the United States military and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tammy Baldwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tammy" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Baldwin".

Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator