

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

October 5, 2011

Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert
Chief of Naval Operations
2000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Admiral Greenert:

Congratulations on your assumption of command of the Navy as the 30th Chief of Naval Operations. As you begin your tenure as CNO, we write to reiterate our strong support for the Navy's decision to homeport a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier at Naval Station Mayport in Jacksonville, Florida - and to ask that you consider accelerating this move, as it is in the best national security interest of our Navy and our nation.

You may hear from a few persistent critics of the project, but as you know the decision to disperse the East Coast carrier fleet has been examined and re-examined by the Navy, Department of Defense, and Government Accountability Office (GAO). Every study affirmed and reaffirmed, as in the case of the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, what the Navy has maintained all along - that dispersing our capital ships is in our best national security interest.

The March 2011 GAO report even found that making Mayport ready for a nuclear carrier could cost millions of dollars less than originally estimated. The decision has been supported by the past four CNOs, and both the Bush and Obama Administrations. Your predecessor, Admiral Gary Roughead, said it best in a speech to the Joint Warfighting Conference in Virginia this past May: "For me it is purely a strategic issue....it remains important that we have some strategic dispersal on the East Coast."

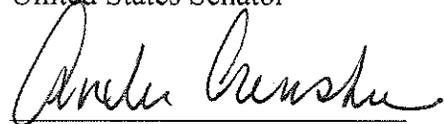
Rather than belaboring a validated decision, we ask that you consider our April 4 request to Secretary Ray Mabus to advance the carrier move from FY19 to FY16. We believe this would reduce the risk to our carrier fleet from a possible terrorist attack or natural disaster, and once and for all put this issue to rest.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to working with you on this and other national security issues important to the Navy and Florida.

Sincerely,



BILL NELSON
United States Senator



ANDER CRENSHAW
Member of Congress



MARCO RUBIO
United States Senator