

International Brotherhood of
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01/29/2026

Mr. Peter Navarro
Senior Counselor for Trade and Manufacturing
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: Support for Wisconsin Shipyard Workers Following Constellation-Class Cancellation

Dear Mr. Navarro,

On behalf of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers and our affiliated locals — Local 696 at Fincantieri Marinette Marine and Local 449 at Fincantieri Bay Ship Building — we write to express serious concerns about the future of Great Lakes shipbuilding following the Navy's cancellation of the Constellation-class frigate program, and to urge the Administration's continued commitment to the skilled union workers who have dedicated their careers to building America's Navy.

The Workers Who Build America's Ships. Our members are craftsmen and craftswomen who have spent years — in many cases decades — mastering the specialized skills required to build naval vessels. They are welders, fitters, electricians, and pipefitters who take pride in their work because the ships they build carry American sailors into harm's way. The frigate cancellation puts more than 1,200 of these workers at risk — workers who have shown up day in and day out, through harsh Wisconsin winters, to do difficult and dangerous work. They have built their lives around these shipyards. They deserve better than uncertainty.

Our Concerns About Workforce Funding. We are encouraged that the defense appropriations bill currently before the Senate includes funding for workforce training and new ship contracts. However, we have significant concerns about how this funding is administered:

Training must be conducted by skilled shipyard workers. The most effective shipbuilding training is on-the-job, master-to-apprentice instruction. Outside contractors cannot replicate the hands-on knowledge that experienced workers pass down.

Funding must stay in our communities. Marinette and Sturgeon Bay depend on the economic activity these yards generate. We are concerned about increasing use of out-of-state subcontractors whose presence does not benefit the local workforce.

Safety must remain paramount. When untrained workers are brought onto job sites, the risk of accidents increases. Our members have reported serious safety concerns about workers unfamiliar with shipyard protocols and hazards.

Long-term workers must be retained. Many members have given 20 or 30 years to these shipyards. They carry institutional knowledge that cannot be replaced.

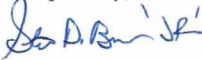
The Path Forward. President Trump has emphasized the importance of American manufacturing, American workers, and national security. The skilled union workers at Wisconsin's shipyards embody all three. They are ready and able to build whatever ships the Navy needs — Medium Landing Ships, frigates, or future designs. What they need is a commitment to long-term, sustainable shipbuilding work in the Great Lakes region.

The funding in the current appropriations bill is a welcome start, but not sufficient to maintain the workforce and industrial capacity the Navy will need. We urge you to work with the Department of the Navy to identify additional contracts for Wisconsin's shipyards, and to ensure the Administration's voice is heard as Congress begins work on the FY2027 budget this spring.

The Boilermakers have been building America's ships for over a century. We are not asking for charity. We are asking for the opportunity to continue doing the work we do best: building the finest naval vessels in the world with American union hands. We respectfully urge your support.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further.

Respectfully,



Stephen 'JR' Bowen
Asst. Director, Shipbuilding
& Metal Trades Services
Intl. Rep. I.S.O., IBB



Archie Corrigan
President
Boilermakers Local 696



Shawn Claffin
President
Boilermakers Local 449

cc: Timothy Simmons, International President, International Brotherhood of Boilermakers
Senator Tammy Baldwin, United States Senate
Senator Ronald Johnson, United States Senate