

DCN 7224



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-2000

IN REPLY REFER TO

18 JUL 2005

Dear Congressman Simmons,

The Navy's force structure plan, which was submitted to the Joint Staff in support of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, was based on the OPNAV 2004 Force Structure Assessment (FSA). The FSA was an evaluation of total Fleet ship requirements.

This study -- a comprehensive, analytical assessment of the entire ship force structure requirements of the Navy Fleet -- was the first force structure requirement study under this Administration's 1-4-2-1 Defense Strategy. Using campaign analysis and modeling, the OPNAV Warfighting and Analysis Branch (N70) supervised and coordinated with all warfighting OPNAV divisions. N77 participated, as did N78 (carrier) and N76 (surface combatant), as well as our acquisition community and the Fleet. The study yielded an objective, analytically derived Force Posture, balanced to fight and win our nation's wars, as well as provide necessary forward presence.

In the course of this study, N77 expressed concerns regarding operational availability assumptions and factors used in modeling the analysis, and made recommendations concerning these assumptions and factors. While some of N77's concerns were resolved in consonance with their recommended position, others were not. However, all concerns were addressed at senior levels in the chain of command as part of the deliberative process.

A key feature of this study is that the assessment of SSN force levels was based upon modeled warfare scenarios against today's threats and future potential threats. Some reports have referenced earlier force structure studies that were based upon peacetime presence requests from the Combatant Commanders. Studies based upon presence requests have yielded higher SSN force levels, and this is not unique to submarines: current Combatant Commander presence requests for carriers, amphibious groups, and surface combatants would require significantly higher force levels to meet such non-integrated and non-optimized requests. In the end, we must balance individual Combatant Commander requests for SSN presence, and presence of all Fleet units, with the best global warfighting and presence posture.

I appreciate your continued interest and support and am ready to answer any further questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vern Clark".

VERN CLARK
Admiral, U.S. Navy

The Honorable Rob Simmons
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 23, 2005

Admiral Vernon Clark
Chief of Naval Operations
1300 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1300

Dear Admiral Clark:

We are deeply concerned by the Department of the Navy's new estimate of the force level needs of the U.S. submarine fleet.

The Submarine Warfare Division, N77, coordinates overall policy for submarine force planning and programming. We have a number of questions concerning the Navy's submarine force policy and the role N77 played in formulating that policy. Specifically,

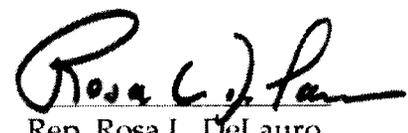
1. What year's Force Structure Plan was used in the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure round?
2. What was N77's role in the development of the Force Structure Plan used in the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Process?
3. Specifically, what input did you request from N77 during the development of the Force Structure Plan?
4. What feedback did N77 deliver to you?
5. Was N77 consulted throughout the process?
6. Was the final plan vetted with N77?
7. Did N77 offer any concerns or recommendations, and if so, what were they?

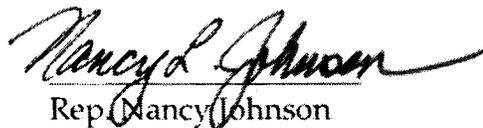
The answers to these questions are of critical importance to our congressional and constitutional responsibilities. We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

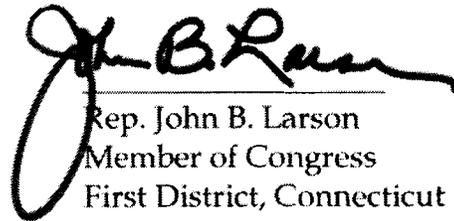

Rep. Rob Simmons
Member of Congress
Second District, Connecticut


Rep. Christopher Shays
Member of Congress
Fourth District, Connecticut


Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress
Third District, Connecticut



Rep. Nancy Johnson
Member of Congress
Fifth District, Connecticut



Rep. John B. Larson
Member of Congress
First District, Connecticut