

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

October 6, 2011

The Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary, Department of the Navy
Office of the Secretary of the Navy
2000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-2000

Dear Secretary Mabus:

We are writing to address the looming closure of Avondale Shipyard and the loss of a critical mass of shipbuilding knowledge, expertise and jobs at this seven decades old Navy facility. As you know, Huntington Ingalls Industries (HII) is scheduled to deliver the last of LPDs from its Avondale yard in May of 2013. The leadership of HII has shared with us their dual approach to deciding the future of their Louisiana yard – seeking commercial shipbuilding work or permanently shuttering the yard. Closure of the shipyard is unacceptable, and we respectfully ask that the Navy stand with Louisiana communities in supporting conversion of the shipyard.

We are strongly opposed to incentivizing the closure of Avondale and request that any funding be used to convert the shipyard to take advantage of commercial opportunities. While we continue to work with key stakeholders and HII to aggressively pursue a strategy that may keep the shipyard open and the workers building ships, the Navy should not undermine these efforts by offering incentives to HII to permanently close the shipyard. Thus, we request the Navy and Department of Defense ensure these funds be applied to any type of venture, including joint ventures, that would bring work to Avondale and preserve this critical portion of our U.S. shipbuilding industrial base. We request the Navy respond in writing by October 24, 2011 to confirm this course of action. We believe that this use of funds is both permissible and in the best interest of the Navy and the Nation.

Please contact Ross Nodurft at 202.224.5824, ross_nodurft@landrieu.senate.gov and Zach Butterworth at 202.225.6636 or zach.butterworth@mail.house.gov for clarification of this matter.

With warmest regards, we are

Sincerely,



Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator



Cedric Richmond
United States Representative