



Dear Republican House Member:

The undersigned fiscally conservative groups ask you to support Amendment #16, sponsored by House Armed Services Committee (HASC) Chair Adam Smith (D-WA) and Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), to allow the Navy to decommission nine Littoral Combat Ships (LCS).

The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) includes a provision to retire nine LCS that by the Navy's own admission have failed at their primary task. Despite this, during the HASC markup, an amendment was successfully offered to block the decommissioning of five of those ships. Chairman Smith's amendment would allow the Navy to retire all nine ships, in keeping with the budget request and common sense.

At a recent HASC hearing Admiral Gilday, the Chief of Naval Operations, said, "The primary reason why the nine LCS ships [are on] the retirement list has to do with an anti-submarine warfare system. That was the primary battery, main battery, of that ship, that did not work out technically. So after about a year and a half study, *I refuse to put an additional dollar against a system that wouldn't be able to track a high-end submarine in today's environment.*" (Emphasis added)

As fiscal conservatives, we are concerned about both our nation's \$24 trillion in public debt and seemingly endless annual deficits. Continued spending on systems that fail to perform for today's sailors and the military services want to retire will both add to that debt and jeopardize the Pentagon's ability to meet future requirements. We agree that not one additional dollar should be spent on ships that don't meet their mission.

Rhetoric stating the ships will just be scrapped should be balanced against statements from the Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, who noted some of the decommissioned LCS could be transferred to allies or other partners with different mission requirements. Preliminary discussions with other countries indicate an interest in acquiring the ships.

The cost of "buying back" the five LCS, just in Fiscal Year 2023, is estimated to be \$318.6 million. The Smith amendment would, instead, spend that money on organic munitions industrial base safety and modernization upgrades, Navy Aviation Logistics, and Navy Combat Logistics Forces. While we would prefer that at least some of that money go to deficit reduction, we point to the five-year savings for operating and maintaining all nine ships from (FY23 through FY27) which is estimated to be \$4.347 billion.

Saving more than \$4 billion over five years, coupled with not spending one more dollar on a system that fails the fleet and doesn't meet the mission requirement, is the right vote for American taxpayer interests. As fiscal conservatives, we urge you to vote yes on the Smith amendment. For more information, please contact Wendy Jordan, wendy@taxpayer.net.

Taxpayers for Common Sense

60 Plus Association

Concerned Veterans for America

Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

National Taxpayers Union

R Street Institute

Rio Grande Foundation

Taxpayers Protection Alliance