

# Courtney Reacts to Esper's Battle Force 2045 Comments on Submarine Shipbuilding



Rep. Joe Courtney of Connecticut, left, shakes hands with Aviation Boatswain's Mate Launch/Recovery (Equipment) Jeremy Stoecklein prior to a 2016 tour of the ship's Electromagnetic Aircraft Launching System during a scheduled visit. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Patrick Grieco

NORWICH, Conn. – Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Connecticut, chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, issued on Oct. 6 the following statement regarding Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper's Oct. 6 comments on submarine shipbuilding during a preview of future Navy Force Structure Plan.

“Today, Secretary Esper previewed a long-overdue force structure plan that begs for more detail and explanation,” Courtney said. “Notably, the Secretary shared the predictable outcome of these months of review and study – that we need a bigger and more capable submarine force. After four long years of stonewalling Congress's commitment to enlarging our nation's submarine fleet – including submitting a budget this year that proposed a 19% cut to the submarine budget and eliminated a planned Virginia class submarine – the Trump administration today acknowledged what has long been blindingly obvious: Our undersea fleet is dangerously small.

“If Secretary Esper is serious about boosting production, he could direct his department to support the House-passed authorization and funding levels for a second Virginia-class submarine in 2021 that reverses the Administration's anemic shipbuilding budget in the House-Senate conference process happening right now,” Courtney added.