

SECNAV Del Toro Names Future Nuclear-Powered Attack Submarine USS Baltimore



Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks accepts a proclamation naming her the sponsor of the future submarine USS Baltimore from Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro after the naming ceremony for the USS Baltimore in Baltimore, Sept. 20, 2024. (E.J. Herson, Department of Defense)

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BALTIMORE (Sept 20, 2024) – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced that the future Virginia-class nuclear-powered attack submarine SSN 812 will be named USS Baltimore. Del Toro made the announcement during a ship naming ceremony held in Baltimore aboard the historic USS Constellation, Sept. 20.

The future USS Baltimore honors the city of Baltimore, the crews of one Continental Navy ship, and the five previous Navy vessels named Baltimore.

The naming selection of the future USS Baltimore (SSN 812) continues the recent trend of naming Virginia-class submarines after cities. Del Toro previously named USS Long Island (SSN 809), USS San Francisco (SSN 810), and USS Miami (SSN 811).

“The city of Baltimore maintains a strong connection with our maritime services and is a critical enabler of our National Maritime Statecraft,” said Del Toro. “It is my honor and privilege to announce the name of the next Virginia-class nuclear-powered submarine, SSN-812, USS Baltimore.”

Maryland Sen. Ben Cardin joined Del Toro for the ceremony

honoring Baltimore.

“Maryland is proud of our connection to the Navy and our strong history as a coastal state,” said Cardin. “I am excited that the next USS Baltimore will be sailing the seas again as the Navy’s newest submarine. Our Navy maintains and protects free and open international waters. From defending our young nation from pirates in the late 1700s to ensuring freedom of navigation today in the Red Sea and Taiwan Strait, our Navy is always on watch.”

Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott also served as a guest in the official party and spoke about the honor and meaning behind the naming of the Navy’s newest submarine.

“We are honored that Baltimore is being represented across the globe once again with the naming of this future ship,” said Scott. “As a city with such a rich naval and maritime history, the naming of the USS Baltimore ensures that legacy will continue to live on for decades to come. I want to extend my deepest thanks and gratitude to the U.S. Navy for this honor and for continuing to uplift our city, including all Baltimoreans who choose to serve.”

Along with the ship’s name, Del Toro also announced Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen Hicks will serve as the ship’s sponsor. In her role as sponsor, she will represent a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew.

“When Baltimore joins the fleet, with a world-class crew, it will be among the most agile, lethal, resilient, and capable conventional nuclear-powered submarines we’ve ever made,” said Hicks. “Make no mistake about Baltimore’s purpose, like all of our submarines, conventional and otherwise, we build them not to provoke war, but rather to prevent wars, through deterrence.”

The city of Baltimore has significant ties to American and Naval history. The Port of Baltimore was established in 1706 and the Town of Baltimore in 1729. One of the Navy's six founding frigates, USS Constellation, was built in Baltimore, and the city's skilled ship workers later would construct the famous Baltimore clipper ships. In 1814, the Battle of Baltimore inspired the American national anthem.

The first Baltimore served in the Quasi-War against France, while the second Baltimore served during the Civil War. The third Baltimore fought in the Battle of Manila Bay during the Spanish-American War and later conducted mine-laying operations in World War I. The fourth Baltimore earned nine battle stars during World War II, fighting in campaigns for the Caroline Islands, Gilbert and Marshall Islands, and Okinawa. The fifth Baltimore participated in undersea operations against the Soviet Union, completing a variety of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions. The Navy simultaneously decommissioned and struck the most recent vessel from the list on 10 July 1998.

After the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in March 2024, the Navy provided equities to the established "Key Bridge Response Unified Command." NAVSEA's Navy Supervisor of Salvage and Diving (SUPSALV) led critical efforts to support the clearance of the Port of Baltimore's Fort McHenry Federal Channel, responsible for managing all on-scene assets tasked with debris removal and channel clearing. Del Toro personally assessed the site and met with Navy personnel on April 19, 2024.

Attack submarines are designed to seek and destroy enemy submarines and surface ships; project power ashore with Tomahawk cruise missiles and Special Operation Forces (SOF); carry out Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions; support battle group operations; and engage in mine warfare.