

Wicker Praises HII Contract for Amphibious Transport Dock Ship



An artist's rendering of an amphibious transport dock ship.
Huntington Ingalls Industries

ARLINGTON, Va. – The earlier-than-expected April 3 award to Huntington Ingalls Industries' shipbuilding division of a \$1.5 billion contract modification for the procurement of the detail design and construction of amphibious transport dock ship LPD 31 was praised by a U.S. senator as a move to shore up shipbuilding.

Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, commended the decision to award the shipbuilding contract for LPD 31, which he said "was announced earlier than expected and intended to help the Mississippi shipbuilder mitigate the destabilizing effects of the coronavirus outbreak on its workforce," according to a release from the senator.

"This is great news for the dedicated men and women of Ingalls Shipbuilding and the many other suppliers who rely upon a stable rate of construction at the shipyard," Wicker said. "The talented tradespeople in Pascagoula have been continuing the fight to get our Navy the ships it needs, even in the midst of the great uncertainty brought on by the coronavirus epidemic."

LPD 31 will be the 15th in the San Antonio class and the second Flight II LPD, according to an April 3 release from Huntington Ingalls.

"In building this 15th LPD, Ingalls experienced shipbuilders will continue this hot production line of great amphibious

warships for our Navy/Marine Corps team,” Ingalls Shipbuilding President Brian Cuccias said in the release.

Wicker worked with the other members of the Senate Armed Services Committee to authorize procurement of LPD 31 and provide incremental funding authority to the Navy in the fiscal 2019 and 2020 National Defense Authorization Acts, his release said. Both actions gave the Navy the flexibility to expedite the ship’s purchase.

The San Antonio class is a major part of the Navy’s 21st century amphibious assault force. The 684-foot-long, 105-foot-wide ships are used to embark and land Marines, their equipment and supplies ashore via air cushion or conventional landing craft and amphibious assault vehicles, augmented by helicopters or vertical takeoff and landing aircraft such as the MV-22 Osprey.