

and it is designed from the keel up to meet the Army's lift requirements. I am excited about this part of our strategic shipbuilding program.

We owe a great deal of thanks to Representative Jack Murtha and his colleagues—some of whom are here today—for having the vision and courage to lead the charge to build the required sealift for our Soldiers and Marines. The young men and women we send to fight and win our Nation's wars deserve every ounce of support we can give.

The other side of the sealift coin is that United States must maintain a strong Navy—forward deployed—to keep the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) open.

Protection and maintenance of the SLOCs is a primary role of our Navy. America must ensure that we can move the military equipment whenever and wherever needed. But, we must also guarantee the free flow of commerce through the world's waterways. Peacetime, forward deployed United States Naval forces are the answer.

The forward presence of our Navy ensures unfettered access to global sea lanes. What these forces bring is stability . . . and economic benefits for American industry and labor.

The continuous presence of maritime forces helps maintain fragile regional balances and assure economic stability by guaranteeing freedom of movement upon the world's oceans. In this increasingly interdependent world economy, the United States Navy keeps trade routes open simply by being there. This often overlooked aspect of global maritime presence is of inestimable value to the U.S. and to the entire world economy. For example, note that, excluding that with Canada and Mexico, 90% of America's international trade travels on the high seas. The imperative for protection of the SLOCs is clear.

Our continuous Naval forward presence requires ships and submarines. And, while building the Navy and Marine Corps of the 21st Century remains one of my top priorities, it is the responsibility of all of us gathered today to ensure that America builds the right force. We must maximize our limited resources, yet protect the irreplaceable shipbuilding art which produces the best ships and submarines in the world.

From the Navy perspective, we are on the right course. I am very excited about our shipbuilding plan. It is robust and forward-thinking. Thanks to Congress, we have a solid—and fully funded—budget for shipbuilding to ensure we have the right force to maintain our global presence requirements.

In fact, over the Future Years Defense Plan, we are spending more than 57 billion dollars on 31 new ships, submarines, and major conversions. We have funding for CVN 77; LPD 17 and DDG 51 are on track; and, with Congressional approval, teaming for construction of the New Attack Submarine will solve some difficult funding and industrial base issues we face now and into the future.

We are also conducting research and development for the next generation aircraft carrier—or CVX, the Maritime Fire Support Demonstrator, and a new surface combatant—or SC21. These new programs are exciting because they will use the most advanced technology mankind has to offer, including stealth, advanced materials, and passive damage control to name but a few. They will represent a true revolution in the conduct of maritime operations.

But it is not just the number of ships we are building or planning, but the incredible increase in capability that we are building into each new platform. There simply are no finer, or more advanced, ships and sub-

marines being built anywhere else in the world.

Our shipbuilding plan is an extremely positive and balanced program. But, there is still a long way to go to ensure we have the funding necessary for our ship and aircraft modernization requirements coming in the next decade. That is an issue on which I will be working closely with Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen and Congress in the months ahead. The Quadrennial Defense Review—or QDR—is but the first step in this process.

It is clear that we face a world filled with challenges and uncertainties. The fact is that our Navy and maritime industry must meet the future together—with a single vision. The key is to size the vision correctly—and to build room for plenty of flexibility into our plans and policies to address the upcoming challenges. I like President Harry Truman's idea. He said:

"You can always amend a big plan, but you can never expand a little one. I don't believe in little plans. I believe in plans big enough to meet a situation which we can't possibly foresee now."

I view this period in our history just as an extraordinary opportunity to take stock . . . to build the "big plans" for the future security of the United States. But we must do this together . . . in the halls of Congress, in the Pentagon, and in the shipyards and the seas around the world.

Again, it has been an honor to represent the wonderful men and women of the Department of the Navy here today. Thank you and all members of the National Security Caucus for this very special award. God bless the men and women of the United States Congress entrusted to lead this great Nation . . . God bless those of you that carry on Paul Hall's legacy . . . and God bless America.

NATIONAL CITY'S RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER PATROL: AN EFFECTIVE CITIZEN CRIME FIGHTING PROGRAM TO HELP TAKE BACK OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 1997

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise to honor National City's Retired Senior Volunteer Program and the spirit of community involvement that has brought this and other citizen-run programs into focus as some of the most effective crime fighting tools.

I am particularly impressed by the cooperation in National City, CA, between the chamber of commerce, the crime prevention commission, city leaders, and the police department in making this program a reality.

All across this Nation, citizens are participating in Retired Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVP) and the first—and still greatly effective citizen crime-fighting program—Neighborhood Watch. These dedicated citizens deserve to receive credit for their work.

With my Taking Back Our Neighborhoods Crime Fighting Act, citizens who pitch in with their time would be rewarded. The act would give a \$50 tax credit to people actively involved in Neighborhood Watch groups and other organizations—such as RSVP—that are committed to the reduction of local crime.

Officials throughout the Nation agree that Neighborhood Watch and citizen programs

need to be encouraged. My bill is backed by over two hundred police chiefs, sheriffs, district attorneys, community groups, and elected officials—including mayors of cities big and small—from across the country who supported this bill in the last Congress.

I am proposing this tax credit because citizen crime-fighting programs work. They are the most effective crime reduction tools in our communities. Throughout the country, Neighborhood Watch groups have made people feel safer and more secure in their homes, parks, and streets.

Neighborhood Watch and citizen patrols establish relationships among neighbors—and establish partnerships between neighborhoods and their police officers. Citizens are trained how to watch out for their families and monitor their neighborhoods, how to be observant and reliable witnesses, and how to assist their local police.

National City's Retired Senior Patrol officers will provide many of the routine non-life-threatening tasks that police officers perform and free up officers for work that requires sworn police officers. The National City RSVP'ers will perform vacation house checks, traffic control, conduct safety surveys for residents and businesses and will check on seniors living alone. Because of their presence in the community, residents will get to know them and their link to the police department. When neighbors see something suspicious—they'll know who to call.

Similar efforts have been successful. During the last 3 years, San Diego—with its RSVP, Citizens Patrol and Neighborhood Watch—has seen an overall reduction of 36 percent in the crime rate, and a 44- to 48-percent decrease in robberies, homicides and burglaries. Most importantly, those of us who participated were empowered—we felt stronger, we fostered a sense of community, and we saw that we could make a difference in people's lives.

But we still have a long way to go to feel safe in our homes and our neighborhoods. Encouraging people to participate in citizen crime-fighting programs will help us protect our families. Giving people in citizen crime fighting groups a \$50 tax break will support the RSVP and the many residents already involved in crime prevention programs, while encouraging more community participation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend National City and all of its residents involved in setting up the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. And I ask my colleagues to back up the citizens in their community—like I have the National City RSVP and others like them—and support this important piece of legislation, H.R. 1529. Working together—and only by working together—can we truly reclaim our streets.

RHODE ISLAND TO HOST NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HON. ROBERT A. WEYGAND

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 1997

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce an event that will be taking place in Rhode Island in the next millennium. The National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Preservation Conference will be held October