

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 11, 2025

Terence G. Emmert
Secretary of the Navy (Acting)
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652
Washington, DC 20350

Subject: Defense Industrial Base Exception to Policy Regarding Deferred Resignation Program for Federal Employees

Dear Acting Secretary Emmert,

We write with concern regarding the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) recently announced policy which offers a deferred resignation program for federal employees. Reportedly, OPM stated that it "cannot give you full assurance regarding the certainty of your position," should workers choose not to resign.

As you are no doubt aware, the men and women who work at our public shipyards are critical members of our defense industrial base, without whom the ability to repair, retrofit and refuel our country's submarines would be in jeopardy. In our states, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY) has nearly eight thousand civilian employees, creating more than \$1.5 billion in annual economic impact in surrounding communities.¹ As our military's "pacing threat," the People's Republic of China, is rapidly expanding its nuclear weapons programs, the role that our own submarines play in the survivability of our nuclear triad cannot be overstated.

We ask that the Department of the Navy engage with OPM to provide an exception for employees at PNSY and other parts of the defense industrial base from recently announced workforce-shaping policies. Our shipyards cannot afford to reduce their workforces. In fact, PNSY needs to hire 550 workers annually just to meet Navy demand for the foreseeable future.

While we continue to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, reductions to the size of our defense industrial workforce cannot be one of them. To do so would make our country less safe, and we urge you to maintain this necessary investment in our economic and national security.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

¹ Lenahan, I. (2024, September 19). Portsmouth Naval Shipyard economic impact \$1.5B: Towns with most workers, payroll listed. *Portsmouth Herald*.

Jeanne Shaheen

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United States Senator

Susan M Collins

Susan M. Collins
United States Senator