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March 2, 2016

The Honorable Raymond Mabus  
Secretary  
United State Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20350

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I write to seek your support for naming a SSN-774 Virginia-class attack submarine in honor of the State of Wisconsin.

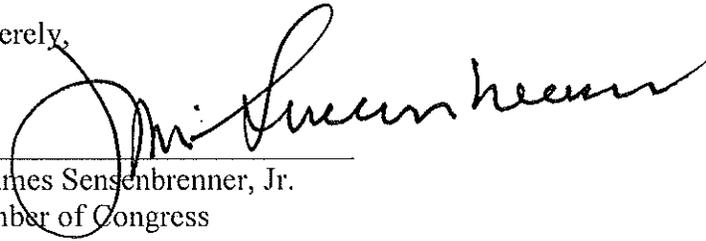
As you know, Virginia-class submarines are generally named after U.S. states. So far, only two United States Navy ships have been named in honor of Wisconsin, most recently an Iowa-class battleship, the USS Wisconsin (BB-64) last served in the Gulf War. After it's decommissioning in September 1991, Wisconsin is no longer represented in the U.S. Navy fleet.

The State of Wisconsin deserves a place in the fleet. Wisconsin has a long and storied history in building and supplying U.S. Navy ships. In fact, one of the country's largest shipbuilders, Marinette Marine Corporation, was founded in Wisconsin in 1942 to help aid the allied war effort. Having started small, it has now built hundreds of vessels for service in the U.S. Navy. Many other Wisconsin companies are also involved in the production of U.S. Navy vessels; there is not a single congressional district in Wisconsin not involved in the shipbuilding industry. Predictably, many of the parts and technology in the Virginia-class are manufactured in Wisconsin, including bearings, composites, computer products, valves, and generators.

Wisconsin's own submarine also serves as a tribute to all current and former Wisconsin sailors, many of whom have received some of the highest honors bestowed on sailors. Because of the Virginia-class's close combat and littoral capabilities, one veteran of particular note is Delafield's Commander William Barker Cushing. Commander Cushing gained notoriety for a nighttime raid in the littorals of the Roanoke River in October 1864 when he sunk the CSS Albemarle with a close-range torpedoing, helping turn control of the harbor back to Union and stopping the threat to the blockade. He received a Thanks of Congress for his actions, and has had five ships named in his honor, including the first torpedo boat ever launched for the Navy. But Cdr. Cushing is just one of the many men and women from Wisconsin who have served admirably in the U.S. Navy, and all would be honored to have a ship bear the name of their home state.

As the Secretary of the Navy, I understand that your office receives hundreds of letters and suggestions each year from citizens, military retirees, and members of Congress. I thank you for your time and consideration of this request, and I look forward to your favorable reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.  
Member of Congress