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Aircraft Carrier Suppliers Meet on Capitol Hill to Advocate for Carrier Programs

Washington, D.C. – More than 100 members of the Aircraft Carrier Industrial Base Coalition (ACIBC) will meet with their Members of Congress and staff as part of the fourth annual conference. The two-day event gives suppliers an opportunity to meet with Navy officials and their Congressional delegations to discuss the importance of carriers to national defense and the role of the industrial base in supporting the Navy's mission. As part of this year's efforts, ACIBC members will request Congressional support for full funding for the President proposed budget for carrier construction.

This advocacy day is extremely important because carrier suppliers are contributing to the construction of one of the nation's most trusted and prized military platforms. With the support of ACIBC member companies Northrop Grumman is currently constructing the *George H. W. Bush*, the nation's tenth and final *Nimitz*-class aircraft carrier. That carrier is scheduled for delivery to the U.S. Navy in late 2008. These suppliers also will play a critical role in the construction of the *Gerald R. Ford*, the first ship in the CVN 78 class, which will consist of 12 ships.

"Each year, we look forward to coming to Washington to raise awareness about the importance of carrier funding and the need for a strong, stable industrial base," said Rick Giannini, Chair of the ACIBC and President of Milwaukee Valve Company in New Berlin, Wisconsin. "This conference gives our Members a valuable opportunity to inform Congress about the challenges facing carrier programs and our industry and to build greater support for this important military platform."

Founded in 2004 and comprised of more than 400 members, the ACIBC is a strong voice for carrier funding. In addition to its leadership, the ACIBC is represented by a regional board with members from the Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Northeast, Southern and Western regions. The entire industrial base is made up of more than 100,000 workers representing over 2,000 companies in 46 states.

"We plan to give a voice to the thousands of workers who contribute to the construction and maintenance of aircraft carriers that protect our nation's borders at home and abroad," added Darrell Grow, ACIBC Vice-Chair and Chief Operation Officer for the Ammcon Corporation in Hillsboro, Oregon. "Our lives and jobs as well as the security of our nation depend on the viability of the carrier industry."

In a speech to the members about carrier force structure and the industrial base Vice Admiral David Architzel, Principal Deputy, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition stated, "Our nation needs to have the capability to fight irregular and high-end wars, and the carrier and air wing team deliver on both. It is important that Congress understand and appreciate the vital role of the carrier fleet and the need to maintain a stable building cycle that supports the industrial base. ACIBC members should take great pride in their contribution to our national defense."

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