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Aircraft Carrier Suppliers Return to DC to Advocate for at least 11 Carriers

(March 22, 2022) Washington, DC — More than 300 ACIBC members convened in Washington, D.C., and virtually, this week to advocate for steady and predictable funding for the aircraft carrier program.

Coalition members representing a supply-chain industrial base of 2,000 companies across 45 states gathered to discuss the importance of a Navy Fleet of at least 11 nuclear powered aircraft carriers and how the industrial base is building the *Ford*-class to be one of the most advanced-ships in the fleet for the next century.

Coalition members will engage with their elected officials to speak with them about the impact the aircraft carrier program has on local businesses, the community, and the nation. These supply-chain companies will urge Congress to continue to support carrier construction and Refueling and Complex Overhaul at the optimal level for the warfighter, taxpayer, and supplier.

“It’s good to be back in DC to see this supply-chain community in person. This industry of essential workers never stopped delivering orders during the pandemic. It never closed. It fought through. But as the industrial base looks to the future, it is confronted with workforce shortages, inflation, and regulation challenges. We will continue to work with Congress and the Administration to build the greatest ships in the fleet to beat the threats of today and tomorrow. And steady, predictable funding enables us do that,” said Rick Giannini, ACIBC chairman and president and CEO of Milwaukee Valve Company in New Berlin, Wisconsin.

At the two-day event, coalition members heard from speakers such as: Rear Admiral Andrew Loisel (Director, Air Warfare Division, N98, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations), Rear Admiral James Downey (Program Executive Officer, Aircraft Carriers, U.S. Navy), Dr. Eric Labs (Senior Analyst Naval Forces and Weapons, Congressional Budget Office,), Ron O'Rourke (Naval Affairs Analyst Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress), and Newport News Shipbuilding, leadership and a dozen Members of Congress (virtually).

A key takeaway from the event was that while the past two years has been difficult for the industry – the stability provided by multi-ship contracts from the carrier program helped save jobs, kept businesses open, and built the ships to meet America’s national security demands. While not fully recovered from the impacts of the pandemic, steady progress continues, and the future is bright for the industrial base. The *Ford*-class ushers in a new era of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers with a transformed supply-chain, which has invested in new equipment and trained new talent to design, build and maintain the warships our nation needs.

To learn more about ACIBC and aircraft carriers, please visit: www.ACIBC.org. Check out the highlights from Action Days by following @ACIBC on Twitter and LinkedIn, or by checking out the hashtag #ActionDays2022.

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ABOUT THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER INDUSTRIAL BASE COALITION (ACIBC)

The Aircraft Carrier Industrial Base Coalition (ACIBC) represents businesses that supply parts, equipment and services for the construction and maintenance of U.S. Navy aircraft carriers. Established in 2004, ACiBC seeks to preserve the strength of the aircraft carrier force and promote the value of the aircraft carrier industrial base as a vital part of the nation's overall defense structure.