

Remarks by the Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
Announcement of LCS 5 and LCS 7 Names
Marinette, WI
Friday, 18 March, 2011

Thank you. Thank you for having us here today -- Senator Carl Levin from Michigan right across the river and your own Senator Herb Kohl.

This is a happy day. We announced yesterday that we signed the contract for the next two LCSs to be built here in Marinette. So we're going to keep you folks busy for a little while.

The first ship that you all built -- and by the way, I'm the only one wearing a coat up here, I want you to notice that, but I'm from Mississippi. The first ship that you built, the Freedom, deployed two years early. In its first deployment in the Caribbean, in a little bit more than three weeks, it seized almost three tons of cocaine. And the reason was that those fast boats the drug runners used would see a gray ship on the horizon and just figure they could outrun it. Well, they couldn't.

These are going to be the backbones of the U.S. Navy for the next few decades. And it's because of the skill of the workforce here. - what you all have done. And thanks to these two senators -- we would not be standing here today without the hard work that they did in November and December of 2010 to allow us to buy both variants - to allow us to buy the ones from here and the ones from Mobile.

And it's because you -- the companies that you represent- got the price down so that we saved almost \$3 billion on buying 20 ships - 10 from here, 10 from Mobile. That's a good deal for the Navy, it's a good deal for Marinette, it's a good deal for Mobile, and it's a good deal for the United States of America.

I'm not going to keep you all out here for very much longer, but I did want to announce one thing; these are the fifth and seventh ships, LCSs, to be built. I'm standing here in front of Fort Worth and I thought that instead of just calling them LCS 5 and LCS 7, that they ought to have names.

One of the really cool parts of the job of being Secretary of the Navy is you get to name every ship of the United States Navy. Now, I thought about naming them The Levin and The Kohl, but there's something about having to be dead before you get a ship named for you and I just didn't want to do that to them.

So LCS 5, the next ship to be built here, is going to be the USS Milwaukee and the LCS 7, the USS Detroit. They're going to be the fifth ship named Milwaukee and the sixth ship named Detroit that have sailed for the United States. So we've had two cruisers, the Milwaukee and the Detroit, that both fought in World War II. These ships are worthy successors to those other Detroits and Milwaukees.

I named these ships because they're two great cities, but more than that, because it's to honor you, the workers that build these ships that we send to sea to protect this country. And we depend on those ships for our protection and to protect the young men and women who will sail them for the next three decades.

Thank you so much. Thank you, Marinette. God bless America and God bless the USS Milwaukee and USS Detroit.