

**STATE *of* CONNECTICUT**  
**OFFICE *of* MILITARY AFFAIRS**  
**(OMA)**

**Annual Report**  
**Fiscal Year 2022-2023**



***Robert T. Ross***  
***Executive Director***

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## **I. Introduction**

For its legendary support in the Revolutionary War, President George Washington called Connecticut the “*Provisions State.*” From the beginning of America’s democracy, Connecticut has played a vital role in producing the diverse and highest quality human and physical resources for our nation’s defense.

Units of the Connecticut National Guard are dispersed in armories and other facilities across the State. Throughout its long history, dating back to colonial militias, Guard units have responded to state and national emergencies and performed combat operations worldwide. The Connecticut National Guard is headquartered next to the State Capitol in Hartford, in the massive State Armory and Arsenal building dedicated by President William H. Taft in 1909.

In 1794, after the Continental Congress decided to create a United States Navy, an expedition sailed from New London to retrieve live oak, the hardest wood available, to build America’s first warships at different shipyards along the East Coast. These ships were not modified merchant vessels. They were designed from the keel up to be warships. One of them, the USS *Constitution*, remains the oldest commissioned warship in the world.

The Navy base in Groton was originally a Naval Yard and Storage Depot, established in 1868. It was built on land donated by the people of Connecticut. The State Legislature provided \$15,000, and the City of New London appropriated \$75,000 to purchase land on the east bank of the Thames River in the New London harbor. In 1916, the base was designated the nation’s first Naval Submarine Base (SUBASE) and home of the Submarine School.

The first land-based campus of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy was established at Fort Trumbull in 1910 and then moved to land donated by the City of New London in 1915. The Coast Guard Academy is the single officer accession source of all commissioned

officers for the U.S. Coast Guard. Today, the men and women of the Coast Guard serve at stations ashore and aboard cutters deployed throughout the U.S. and in every ocean.

Since the first days of our democracy, Connecticut’s defense manufacturing industry has continued without interruption. The ships, submarines, aircraft, jet engines, helicopters, firearms, and advanced weapon systems built in Connecticut reflect our state’s continuous innovation and highly skilled workforce. Connecticut’s defense industry and military bases produce billions of dollars in economic activity throughout the state, in large and small businesses in virtually every municipality.

### ***Overview of OMA***

The Office of Military Affairs (OMA) was established by Connecticut General Statute 32-58b in 2007. Accordingly, “the Office of Military Affairs shall promote and coordinate state-wide activities that enhance the quality of life of all branches of military personnel and their families and to expand the military and homeland security presence in this state.”

### ***Mission of OMA***

- Coordinate efforts to prevent the closure or downsizing of Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton (SUBASE).
- Support Connecticut’s military families and enhance their quality of life.
- Advocate for Connecticut’s defense industry, a significant component of the state’s economy and an engine of innovation and quality production for the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Encourage the retention of established military and defense industry missions and the relocation of new ones to the state.

- Serve as liaison to the Connecticut congressional delegation on defense and military issues.

### ***Structure and Organization***

As directed in statute, OMA is established within the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) for administrative purposes only. OMA and DECD are co-located at 450 Columbus Boulevard in Hartford, Connecticut.

The office is minimally staffed with a full-time Executive Director, designated as a department head in the executive branch, reporting directly to the Office of the Governor. The Executive Director is supported by DECD staff members and interns who provide support for OMA in various functions including, but not limited to, office administration, public communications, financial management, legal counsel, information technology, economic research, and legislative affairs.

OMA is an active member of the national Association of Defense Communities (ADC), a Washington-based organization representing states and communities nationwide that host military installations. OMA Executive Director Bob Ross was elected to the ADC Board of Directors and served as President from 2021 to 2023. His many contributions to the organization include participation in numerous thought-leading programs in national and regional forums.

## **II. Key Defense Issues for the Nation and State**

As stated below, the Russian war against Ukraine and the growing tension between China and the United States were seen as the most important U.S. defense issues in 2022 and early 2023. On the positive side, the COVID-19 disease was less severe and less deadly worldwide compared to 2020 and 2021.

In the United States, there was a 47% decrease from the 462,193 COVID-related deaths in 2021, according to the National Center for Health Statistics in May 2023. Thankfully, there was no new variant to bring about death or serious illness. According to the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, the following factors helped decrease deaths: (1) Outstanding advances in vaccines to protect against various strains; (2) a combination of vaccines and boosters, oral antivirals, and test kits for treatment and prevention; (3) a growing population of immunity to COVID.

In fact, most countries lowered deaths due to COVID because of successful vaccines and because many of their people had already been infected and developed protection against COVID.

However, China was an exception. It implemented a zero-tolerance policy, which was so difficult for its citizens that they started to rebel against the government in late 2022. In December of that year, China started to ease its restrictions. But, it had significant problems: It was not successful in developing an effective vaccine, it declined to import highly effective vaccines from the United States and European countries, and its huge population had relatively little exposure to COVID. The result was a continued high death rate from COVID in the later months of 2022 and into 2023.

For the United States, 186,702 of the 3.2 million deaths in 2022 were caused by COVID. But a large number of those deaths occurred during the first few months of that year. In all, COVID deaths continued to decline significantly through 2022 and the early months of 2023.

### ***National Security/Foreign Policy Issues***

The Russian invasion of Ukraine – and the support of Ukraine by the United States and other Western nations – were the most prominent national security and foreign policy events during 2022 and into 2023. The Russian invasion was the largest attack against a

country since World War II. It's estimated that by early 2023 there have been tens of thousands of Ukrainian civilian casualties and hundreds of thousands of military casualties.

By April 2023, some 8 million Ukrainians had been displaced within their country, and about 8.2 million had fled to other countries. It's been the largest refugee crisis since World War II.

The Russian invasion has been highly condemned by Western nations. In March 2022, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution condemning the invasion and demanded a Russian withdrawal. The International Court of Justice ordered Russia to suspend the invasion. The Internal Criminal Court opened investigations into Russian war crimes, abduction of children, and genocide. It issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin in March 2023.

Ukraine: Russia invaded Ukraine as a "special military operation" on Feb. 24, 2022. The United States and NATO countries immediately came to the side of Ukraine and condemned Russia. The war continued throughout 2022 and 2023, with no end in sight. The United States has sent billions of dollars to support Ukraine. Since the start of the war until July 31, 2023, the United State has provided \$76.8 billion to Ukraine, as published by the Council on Foreign Relations. This huge amount included weapons and equipment, security assistance, and financial and humanitarian support. It's the largest amount to a European country since the United States – under the administration of President Harry S. Truman – provided vast sums for rebuilding after World War II through the Marshall Plan.

China: Tension between China and the United States grew significantly during 2022. China expressed support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine, displayed efforts to intimidate Taiwan, and continued to steal intellectual property from the United States. In

August 2022 China responded in a belligerent manner to U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. In October 2022, President Joe Biden responded by denying China's access to the United States' advanced semiconductor chips and certain technology needed for artificial intelligence. Also, in October, the Department of Defense (DOD) released its National Defense Strategy. Among the top priorities was to strengthen deterrence with respect to the growing threat posed by China. However, there were some positive aspects between the countries. In November, President Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping met during a G-20 Summit. They promised to work together on important issues like climate change and public health.

Climate Change: Each year the DOD Office of Inspector General (OIG) issues a report on the most serious management and performance challenges facing DOD. Among the top eight challenges identified by the OIG for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 was addressing climate change. The summary of the report stated, in part: "Key to this challenge is expanding climate literacy and training, integrating climate effects into operations, and addressing installations' maintenance and improvement backlog." Climate change is of particular importance to Navy bases on or near the water, such as Naval Submarine Base New London (SUBASE) in Connecticut.

### ***Connecticut Defense Funding***

Connecticut did very well in the FY 2023 defense authorization and appropriations bills. The former – the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) – was passed by Congress on Dec. 23, 2022, and signed into law the same day by President Biden. The defense appropriations bill was part of an omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, that Congress passed on Dec. 23, 2022, and was signed into law by President Biden on Dec. 29, 2022.

After both bills were passed by Congress, Rep. Joe Courtney of Connecticut, then chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces (he became Ranking Member of the subcommittee in 2023 after the Republicans took control of the House in the 2022 elections), said in a statement:

“At a time when many people wonder whether Congress can still work together to get big things done for our country, passage of our bipartisan NDAA followed back-to-back by passage of the 2023 Omnibus [bill] should come as hard evidence that it can.” He added, “It’s no secret that eastern Connecticut has a huge role to play in accomplishing many of the submarine and defense manufacturing opportunities provided in our [FY] 2023 budget . . . This is a great bill for servicemembers and their families, for ship builders and our supply chain, and for eastern Connecticut.”

Following is a summary of key items in the defense portion of the FY 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act:

- \$6.5 billion for the two-per-year build rate of Virginia-class submarines, with \$4.5B for two in 2023 and \$2B in advance procurement for construction of submarines in 2024 and 2025.
- \$3.1B in the second year of funding for the first Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine, with an additional \$2.8B for the development of future hulls.
- \$541 million for an unprecedented investment in the submarine industrial base, in this case for submarine supplier development for the Columbia-class program, and \$207M for submarine workforce development initiatives.
- \$1.2B in submarine research and development of future submarines, including \$316M for the next block of Virginia-class submarines.

- \$15.5M for a construction project at SUBASE New London. It will relocate the existing underwater electromagnetic measurement system due to planned construction of a floating dry dock at Electric Boat for the Columbia-class program.
- \$25M for partnerships with academic institutions conducting research on undersea capabilities. One example is the National Institute for Undersea Vehicle Technology, a collaborative program between the University of Connecticut and the University of Rhode Island.
- \$1.09B for 12 CH-53K Marine Corps helicopters built by Sikorsky, two more than requested by the DOD.
- \$1.8B for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter for the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps, with engines built by Pratt & Whitney (P&W).
- \$1.7B for 16 additional C-130J aircraft to continue modernization of the Connecticut National Guard.
- \$1.2B for 20 Combat Rescue Helicopters built by Sikorsky, including an increase of 10.

Also, the NDAA included an amendment authored by Congressman Courtney relating to AUKUS, the submarine-related working group of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The amendment provided that the U.S. Secretary of Defense would establish a training program for Royal Australian Navy submarine officers to begin training at the Navy Nuclear Propulsion School and eventually be assigned to duty in a U.S. nuclear submarine. Rep. Courtney is the founder and co-chair of the both the bipartisan Friends of Australia Caucus and bipartisan AUKUS Working Group on Capitol Hill.

On March 13, 2003, President Biden, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia met at Naval Base Point Loma in San Diego, CA, to announce the path forward for

the United States and United Kingdom to provide Australia with nuclear powered submarine capability. Also, the three countries agreed to formulate a strategy to help achieve national security goals in the Indo-Pacific region. Rep. Courtney joined the three heads of state for the announcement.

The partnership among the three countries was announced in 2021. It enables Australia to have nuclear-powered submarines; it will buy up to five Virginia-class submarines as part of AUKUS. In the future, submarines will be built in the UK and Australia with technology and support from the United States.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, a member of the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower, said the following about the defense portion of the Consolidated Appropriations Act: “This bipartisan package will make a real difference for people across Connecticut. Historic investments will strengthen Connecticut’s skilled workforce.”

A press release from his office said that Sen. Blumenthal “fought for significant increases to sustain and enhance Connecticut’s already superior defense industrial base and ensure long-term demand for the workforce.”

Another very helpful bill for Connecticut and the United States in general had to do with climate change. In his end-of-the-year report, Connecticut Sen. Chris Murphy noted that the Inflation Reduction Act, signed into law on Aug. 16, 2022, included \$2.6B for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). A member of the Appropriations Committee, Sen. Murphy said the money would fund efforts to “conserve, restore, and protect Connecticut’s coastline,” adding, “Connecticut’s coastline and our state’s access to Long Island Sound are invaluable assets to both the economy and culture of Connecticut.” As stated above, climate

change is one of the key challenges to the United States as determined by DOD.

### Defense Contracts

As reported on page 7, the Nutmeg state’s defense industrial base had an outstanding year in 2022, with \$21.9B in prime contracts.

This was mainly due to \$7.25B in contracts in June – a \$4.38B contract on June 14 to P&W for Joint Strike Fighter engines for Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps and a June 27 \$2.28B contract to Sikorsky for 120 H-60M Black Hawk helicopters – and \$5.95B in December contracts, consisting mainly of a \$5.13B Electric Boat (EB) award for manufacturing, long-lead-time material, and logistics/sustainment support for Columbia-class submarines. Those two months alone accounted for almost two-thirds of the \$21.9B contracts.

### Electric Boat

EB continues to hire workers, perhaps at its greatest pace ever. At EB’s annual legislative meeting on Feb. 28, 2023, in Groton, CT, where EB has its headquarters, company president Kevin Graney said EB was looking to hire 5,750 people in 2023. “My first words to you this morning: EB is hiring,” Graney said.

EB is aiming to have its workforce top off at some 22,000 ten years from now, in 2033. The 5,750 target in 2023 includes 1,300 tradesmen in Groton, 1,500 positions at its Quonset Point facility in Rhode Island, 1,450 engineering and design jobs, and 1,500 other positions. EB hired some 3,700 workers in 2022 and employed about 19,500 people at the start of 2023.

EB’s need for its workforce is the result of the Navy’s strong demand for submarines – two Virginia-class attack submarines each year and the first two Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines in coming years. Looking ahead, EB plans to build 17 more Virginia-

class submarines and 12 Columbia-class submarines. The Columbia-class will be the largest submarines ever built in the United States.

“I’ve been going to EB’s legislative updates for 16 years, and Kevin’s 2023 report far surpassed any that our region has previously seen,” Rep. Courtney said. “As Kevin stated, adding 5,750 jobs this year will represent the fastest rate of job growth in the 100-plus-year history of Electric Boat. The benefits for southern New England are obvious, and so is the challenge to ramp up our job training programs and career and technical schools, as well as our comprehensive middle school and high school training programs.”

Graney and Courtney emphasized the importance of the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board’s (EWIB) Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative. The Pipeline Initiative provides training programs to develop skilled workers, not only for EB but also for the 70-some companies that comprise the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA) and other employers in Connecticut. EWIB has anticipated a 2023 budget of \$30.9M, about 60% of which is allocated to grow the Pipeline.

In a message to EB employees prior to the legislative briefing, Graney said EB will be building submarines at an unprecedented rate. “Over the next 10 years we will hire about 20,000 more employees to keep our ranks at the steady state we need to be, which is somewhere north of about 20,000 people overall on a daily basis,” he said. “Most of these new employees will be in the trades and engineering.”

Graney said EB will continue to reach out to schools at all levels, including career, technical schools, colleges, and universities to develop internships and customized curriculum. “So when someone graduates they’re qualified to work at Electric Boat and, in some cases, [they] have a job in hand before they graduate,” he said.

### Pratt & Whitney

On Sept. 7, 2022, P&W celebrated the delivery of its 1,000th F135 engine for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter at its East Hartford, CT, headquarters. Attending were Rep. Courtney and Rep. John Larson of Connecticut; Larson’s district includes East Hartford. P&W President Shane Eddy thanked them for their presence, saying, “This major milestone has been made possible by their stalwart support for the F135 engine and our innovative Engine Enhancement Program (EEP), designed to save the taxpayer money while delivering the additional power the F-35 requires.”

P&W has been located in East Hartford since the late 1920s, with the campus changing over the years for its military and commercial products. The newest 420,000-square-foot building on the campus opened in 2017 and serves as the company’s most modern engineering facility. Also, on March 24, 2023, P&W announced its plans to invest \$225M through 2028 for a world-class 845-square-foot facility in Oklahoma City, OK, as a hub for depot operations on all P&W military engines. P&W already has an F135 engine Heavy Maintenance Center in Oklahoma City.

P&W’s F135 engine has been a major driver of economic growth in Connecticut, with more than 27,000 direct and indirect jobs and nearly 100 suppliers now. In addition, the F135 program has some 53,000 workers in 36 states around the country.

On Dec. 2, 2022, P&W was awarded a DOD \$115M contract for its F135 Engine Enhancement Program, also known as the Engine Core Upgrade (ECU). “Upgrades like this are a normal part of any major defense program, and the F135 engine has been pushed beyond its original specifications for too long,” said Jill Albertelli, president of P&W’s Military Engines business. “The F-35 Engine Core Upgrade saves taxpayers \$40B in lifecycle costs and builds upon a combat-



tested engine architecture that has more than one million flight hours,” she stated.

In addition, the defense portion of the FY 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act, described above, contained \$75M in additional funding for the F135 Engine Core Upgrade. Jan Latka, vice president of F135 programs at P&W, said that thanks to support from Congress, the upgraded engine will be ready for fielding starting in 2028.

### Sikorsky

Sikorsky Aircraft, based in Stratford, CT, is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding by Igor Sikorsky. An immigrant from Kviv, Ukraine (then the Russian Empire), Sikorsky came to the United States in 1919. After working on the designing of aircraft and teaching astronomy and mathematics in New York City, he formed the Sikorsky Aero Engineering Corp. on a chicken farm near Roosevelt Field on Long Island in 1923.

The company is observing the anniversary by marking historic achievements, conducting events, and producing a book, *The Sikorsky Aircraft Centennial 1923-2023, A Tribute by the Igor I. Sikorsky Historical Archives*. The book tells the story of the company’s growth from a tiny aviation organization on a farm to the premier helicopter company in the United States, with headquarters in Connecticut.

“When you come into Sikorsky, you don’t feel like you’re in a generic homogeneous company,” said Paul Lemmo, Sikorsky president. “You feel like you’re part of an innovative company that continues to want to carry on the work of its founder. And it’s just an incredible honor to be part of that.”

Igor Sikorsky started his company with a group of Russian immigrants who loved aviation. Since then, the company has had a

profound impact on Connecticut and elsewhere, with facilities in Florida, Texas, and Alabama, and overseas in Poland and Australia. Sikorsky now has more than 13,000 employees in the United States and elsewhere.

Igor Sikorsky retired in 1957 after Sikorsky Aircraft moved its headquarters to an 800,000-square-foot plant in Stratford, but he continued to come to his office as a consultant on every helicopter program. He passed away in 1972.

As a fitting start to its 2023 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, on Jan. 23, 2023, Sikorsky delivered its 5,000<sup>th</sup> Hawk variant helicopter, the Army’s UH-60M Black Hawk. “Sikorsky, as a company, has been forged by the Black Hawk,” said Sikorsky president Lemmo. “The Black Hawk and its variants deliver when reliability and performance are non-negotiable. Hawk aircraft continue to demonstrate their versatility and readiness with the latest technological advancements and ongoing U.S. and global investment in the aircraft.”

### **III. Connecticut Defense Industry Outlook**

As stated earlier, the Connecticut defense industrial base received an outstanding \$21.9B in prime contracts in the calendar year 2022. Moreover, this number is very conservative. It is derived from DOD’s daily announcement of contract awards. However, DOD’s contract announcements apply only to prime contracts with a value of \$7.5M or more. The many thousands of DOD contracts with a value less than \$7.5M are not included.

Since it was established in 2007, Connecticut’s OMA has closely tracked defense contracts via DOD’s daily contract announcements. Since that time, the state’s annual defense contracts have been in the \$7-14B range. In the past decade, however, there have been years that soared far above that range. This has been mainly due to

(1) EB’s construction of two Virginia-class submarines per year and now the start of work on Columbia-class submarines; (2) P&W turning out substantial numbers of engines for the F-35 aircraft and sustainment of this and other military engines; (3) Sikorsky’s continued production and maintenance of renowned Black Hawk helicopters and, more recently, the production of CH-53K King Stallion helicopters.

**Trend in Prior Year Defense Contracts**

Figure 1 below shows annual amounts of DOD prime contract awards of \$7.5M or more for calendar years 2013 through 2022. From 2013 through 2016 the annual contracts were relatively modest except 2014. In that year, Connecticut defense contracts zoomed to \$27.1B. This was due to a \$17.6B contract awarded to EB for 10 “Block 4” Virginia-class subs. At the time, it was the largest Navy shipbuilding contract ever awarded.

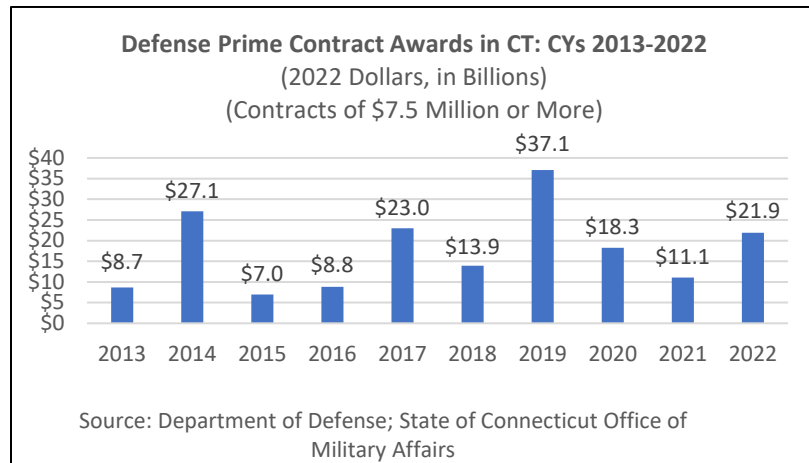


Figure 1

In 2015 and 2016 the contracts dropped to lower levels of \$7.0B and \$8.8B, respectively. The contracts skyrocketed once more, this time in 2017 with a total of \$23.0B. It was mainly due to a \$6.7B

contract to P&W for the sustainment of the F-119 engine used in the Air Force’s F-22 Raptor jet fighter through 2025.

The 2018 amount dropped down to a hefty \$13.9B. But it zoomed again in 2019 to \$37.1B, by far the highest amount since OMA has been tracking defense contracts. It was mainly the result of a staggering \$22.2B contract awarded to EB in December 2019, the Navy’s largest single shipbuilding contract ever, surpassing the 2014 record award by \$5B. The 2019 contract was for nine “Block 5” Virginia-class submarines. Eight of them will have an 84-foot expansion of the hull, known as the Virginia Payload Module, which will increase the attack submarine’s missile capacity.

At the time the 2020 amount of \$18.3B was the fourth highest since 2007. However, the 2022 amount of \$21.9B has become the fourth highest amount, again since OMA has been charting the calendar year contracts.

With the significant annual contract spikes in 2014, 2017, 2019, and now 2022, Figure 1 may give the impression of economic instability in the CT defense industrial base. But this is not the case, for the following reason: The total amounts of contracts announced by DOD are very often considerably greater than the amounts actually obligated, i.e., paid to the contractor when the contracts are awarded. Rather, the contract amounts are spread out over many years. This is particularly true for very large contracts.

For example, Sikorsky was awarded a very substantial \$2.28B contract on June 27, 2022, for 120 H-60M Black Hawk helicopters and related support for fiscal years 2022-2026. However, the only funds obligated at the time of the award were \$478M for FY 2022. Additional funds would be obligated during the remaining fiscal years.

Similarly, on Dec. 21, 2002, EB was awarded a contract for \$5.13B, the largest single contract to a Connecticut defense contractor

during 2022. The contract was for numerous items for Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines. Interestingly, no funding was obligated at the time of the award! Rather, payments would be spread over the next six years, with work under this contract expected to be completed by June 2028.

In sum, the amounts of money from very large defense contracts are very often spread out over many years, providing stability and predictability for Connecticut’s defense industrial base. This stability is prominent in years with more modest contract awards such as 2021 with defense contracts of \$11.1B, lower than the previous four years.

**Suppliers to Leading Contractors**

With construction of Columbia-class submarines underway and the continued construction of two Virginia-class submarines each year, the future is very bright for Connecticut’s submarine industrial base. But there is a significant challenge for suppliers in the state and around the country to keep up with the demanding pace of construction.

EB and its sub construction counterpart, Huntington Ingalls’s Newport News Shipbuilding, award hundreds of million dollars in sub-contracts to suppliers every year. While it is difficult to track such spending, the Submarine Industrial Base Council in Washington, DC, compiles amounts spent or contracted to submarine suppliers for the major submarine programs. More than 5,000 companies nationwide make up the submarine industrial base. The Council estimates that thousands of additional lower-tier suppliers exist across the country.

In February 2023 the Council issued a state-by-state report on sub-contracts. Products were awarded to 2,812 known submarine industrial base suppliers. The total amount nationwide was \$26.9B, about \$1.5B higher than a similar report issued in February 2022 at \$25.4B. The total does not include funding for the two submarine suppliers, EB and Newport News Shipbuilding.

For Connecticut, the total amount in purchase order awards was \$1.1B. The products included specialized components and materials, such as

air revitalization equipment, control valves, specialty filters and alloys, oxygen generators, microswitches, high speed bearings, and pipe fittings. Many of these were produced by highly skilled and well-paid workers. Connecticut’s \$1.1B in submarine products results from gradual increases since a 2020 survey by the Industrial Base Council, which showed Connecticut with \$864.2M. The significant increase over the last three years no doubt is due to the Columbia-class and Virginia-class construction demands.

The Council’s 2023 report also states that Connecticut has 375 first-tier submarine industrial base suppliers, plus an unknown number of lower-tier supplier companies. While Connecticut is a major submarine supplier state, it ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in supplier sub-contract dollar amounts over the past five years at \$1.1B, according to the Council’s report. California is far and away in 1<sup>st</sup> place, at \$5.4B, followed by Virginia at \$3.8B and Pennsylvania at \$2.3B. See Table 1 below, listing the top 10 submarine supplier states by dollar amounts over the past five years.

**Top U.S. Submarine Supplier States**  
(By Dollar Amounts, 2018-2023)

1. California	\$5.4B
2. Virginia	\$3.8B
3. Pennsylvania	\$2.3B
4. Ohio	\$2.1B
5. Maryland	\$1.4B
6. Massachusetts	\$1.3B
<b>7. Connecticut</b>	<b>\$1.1B</b>
8. New York	\$1.0B
9. Wisconsin	\$874M
10. Florida	\$718M

*Table 1*

Interestingly, some of the top 10 sub-contract amounts increased over the past year. For example, New York had \$938M in submarine sub-contracts in 2022; it increased to \$1.0B. Ohio increased from \$1.8B to

\$2.1B. This indicates that the increased demand for submarine components is nationwide.

Connecticut has by far the largest number of submarine suppliers with 375, followed by Virginia at 289 and Massachusetts at 254. It was a significant increase for Connecticut, which was at 352 in the Council’s survey in 2022. Table 2 below shows Connecticut at the top. Most of the states below it have much larger populations. Three of the top 10 sub-supplier states are in New England, with Rhode Island in 7<sup>th</sup> place with 112 in addition to Connecticut and Massachusetts.

**Top U.S. Submarine Supplier States**

(By Number of Suppliers, 2023)

<b>1. Connecticut</b>	<b>375</b>
2. Virginia	289
3. Massachusetts	254
4. California	186
5. Pennsylvania	185
6. New York	144
7. Illinois	129
8. Rhode Island	112
9. New Jersey	100
10. Texas	100

Table 2

Overall, there are some 400 known small-to-medium size supply chain companies in Connecticut – with thousands more in Rhode Island, Massachusetts and elsewhere – that provide products not just for submarines but for all three of DOD’s largest Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM): Electric Boat, Pratt & Whitney, and Sikorsky.

**Connecticut’s Ranking in Defense Spending**

The most recent comprehensive analysis of state-by-state defense spending is *Defense Spending by State, Fiscal Year 2022*, released in October 2023 by the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC) in the Department of Defense. The report is based on research done between March and September of 2023. It is drawn from numerous sources, mainly DOD’s Defense Manpower Data Center and USAspending.gov, which is managed by the Department of the Treasury.

Connecticut did extremely well in the rankings, especially with its relatively small population of 3.6 million compared to other major defense-spending states. It is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> overall in total defense spending; last year in the same DOD document it was ranked 8<sup>th</sup>. In defense spending as a percentage of state Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it came in 3<sup>rd</sup> place compared to 4<sup>th</sup> place last year. And in defense contract spending, Connecticut was ranked 6<sup>th</sup>; last year it came in 7<sup>th</sup> place.

On the other hand, the state is ranked much lower in defense personnel spending, i.e., salaries paid to active duty, National Guard, and reserve personnel in a state, along with civilian DOD employees. This category is dominated by states with many large military bases such as Virginia, California, and Texas. Not surprisingly, CT came in 37<sup>th</sup> in personnel spending and 38<sup>th</sup> in the number of defense personnel.

Figure 2 below shows the rankings for total defense spending, which includes defense contracts and personnel. Interestingly, the DOD report states that defense spending nationwide fell in FY 2022, mainly because the federal government reduced its spending on the COVID pandemic. Contracts and personnel spending fell by \$10.1B over the prior year. This was the result of a 2.3% decrease in contract obligations and a .06% decrease in payroll spending.

However, as stated above, Connecticut is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in defense spending – with the amount of \$22.3B. Due mainly to contract spending, this was a significant increase over \$19.3B in total defense spending in FY 2021,

As shown in Figure 2, states with large amounts of defense contractors and military bases were in the lead: Virginia (\$62.7B), Texas (\$58.0B), California (\$56.2B), Florida (\$30.2B), and Maryland (\$26.4B). Also ahead of Connecticut is New York at \$28.1B in total defense spending. Last year New York ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in total defense spending, at \$30.9B. Prior to FY 2021 and 2022, New York had not even been in the top 10 in recent years. Over the past two years New York has had a remarkable increase in defense spending. This was mainly due to extremely large DOD contracts for COVID-19 vaccines produced in New York: Pfizer, Inc., and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.

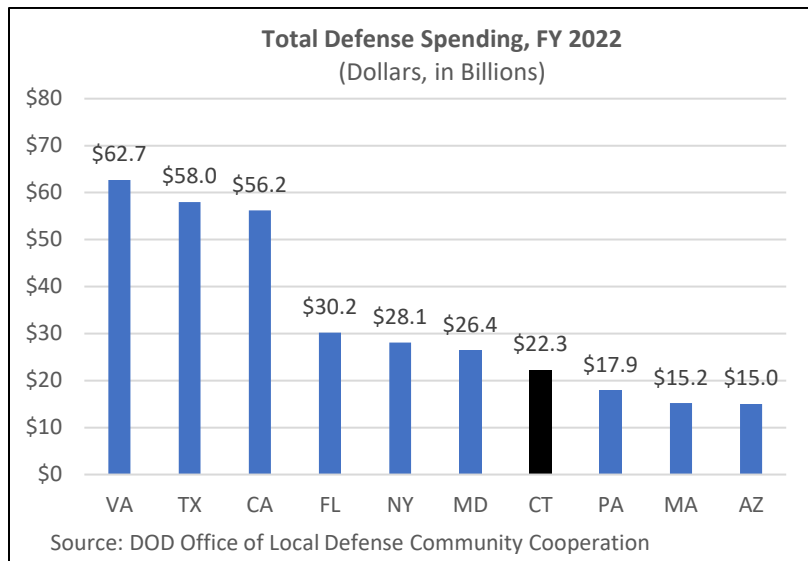


Figure 2

As stated above and as shown in Figure 3 below, Connecticut does very well in the ranking of defense spending as a percentage of state Gross Domestic Product (GDP), in 3<sup>rd</sup> place at 6.9%. Virginia is at the top, with Hawaii second and the District of Columbia behind CT. On average for all states, defense spending comprised 2.5% of the nationwide GDP – almost one third of the GDP spending in Connecticut. Interestingly, several states that exceeded the 2.5% average were not among the top recipients of total defense spending: Hawaii, District of Columbia, Alaska, Kentucky, Alabama, Maine, and Mississippi.

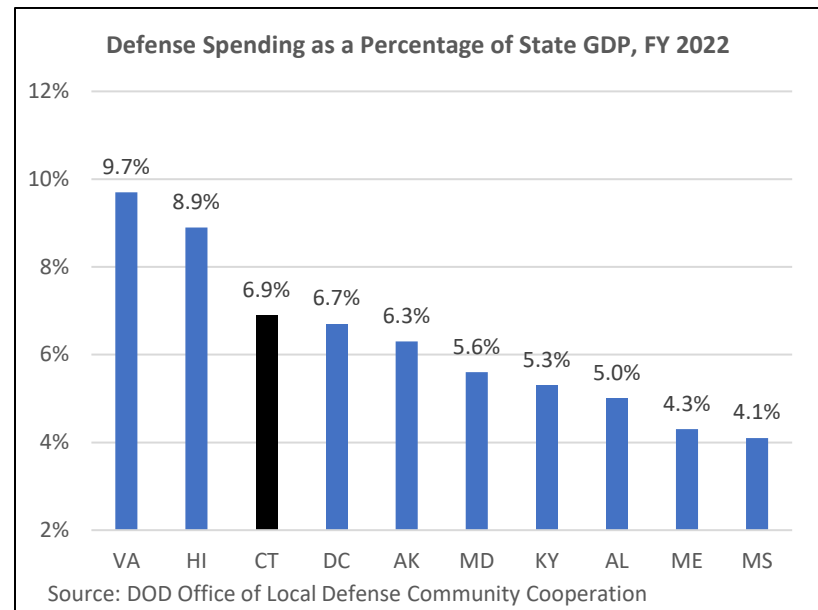


Figure 3

In defense contract spending – excluding DOD spending on personnel – Connecticut is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation at \$21.4B. This is a step up from last year’s rank of 7<sup>th</sup> place at \$18.4B. Again, it is behind states with much larger populations and more military bases – Texas, Virginia, California. And even though Florida has a large

population and numerous military bases, it is barely ahead of Connecticut at \$21.5B. See Figure 4 below.

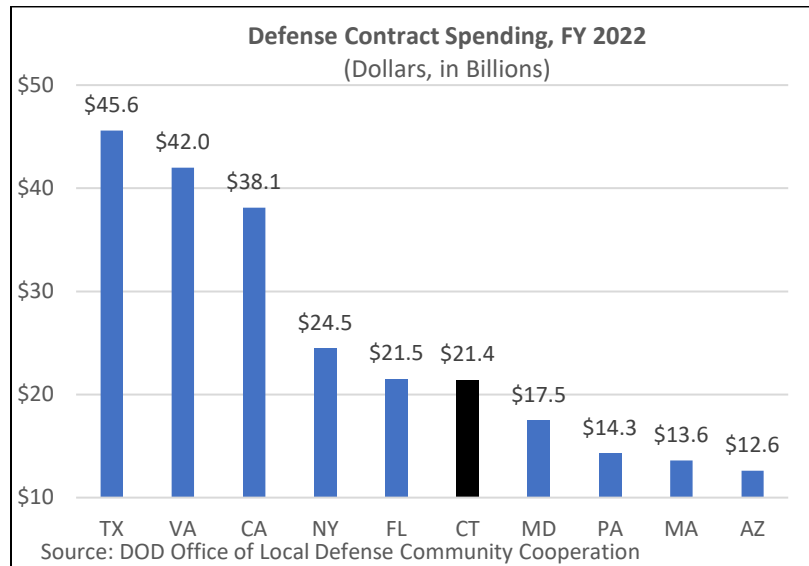


Figure 4

Another way of measuring the strength of Connecticut’s defense industrial base relative to other states is by per capita defense spending – see Figure 5 below. According to the OLDCC report, the FY 2022 per capita defense spending in Connecticut – both for contracts and personnel spending – was \$6,150. Remarkably, the state is ranked second, behind only Virginia at \$7,223 and ahead of Hawaii at \$6,081. Of course, Hawaii has a very low population of 1.5 million. Also, CT’s per capita defense spending is almost four times higher than the average state per capita defense spending across the entire United States, \$1,676.

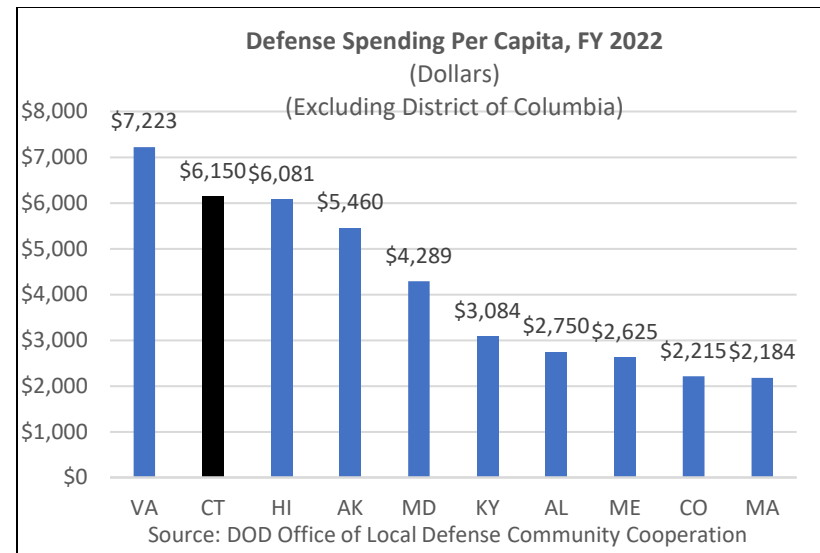


Figure 5

As done in prior years, the OLDCC report lists the 10 leading defense contractors in each state, based on defense contract spending in FY 2022, i.e., from Oct. 1, 2021, through Sept. 30, 2022. The report shows EB at the top with \$9.5B, followed by P&W at \$7.9B and Sikorsky at \$3.3B. Table 3 shows the entire list in the current report.

**Top CT Defense Contractors, FY 2022**

1. Electric Boat	\$9.5B
2. P&W	\$7.9B
3. Sikorsky	\$3.3B
4. Gartner	\$42.4M
5. PCX Aerosystems	\$32.3M
6. Sonalysts	\$31.3M
7. Emprise Corp.	\$31.3M
8. Severson Environment	\$27.3M
9. Triumph Group, Inc.	\$26.6M
10. Hartford Provision Co.	\$22.5M

Table 3

Finally, the OLDCC report lists the top 10 defense contract spending locations nationwide in FY 2022. Surprisingly, two locations for Connecticut are listed: New London is shown as 6<sup>th</sup>, at \$9.7B, due no doubt to EB contract awards; Hartford is listed at 9<sup>th</sup> at \$8.1B, likely because P&W’s headquarters is at East Hartford. New York continues to rank high because of continued defense contracts for COVID vaccines from the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, Inc., located in New York City. See Table 4 below.

**Top Defense Contract Spending Locations, FY 2022**

1. Tarrant, TX	\$18.6B
2. Fairfax, VA	\$17.8B
3. New York, NY	\$17.2B
4. San Diego, CA	\$11.9B
5. Dallas, TX	\$9.8B
<b>6. New London, CT</b>	<b>\$9.7B</b>
7. Los Angeles, CA	\$9.3B
8. Pima, AZ	\$8.6B
<b>9. Hartford, CT</b>	<b>\$8.1B</b>
10. Jefferson, KY	\$8.0B

Table 4

**Summary**

As shown in this DOD report, Connecticut continues to rank among the leading states nationwide for defense contracting despite its modest population. All the data discussed above points to a vibrant defense industrial base providing the nation with critical weapons. In the last few years in particular – due in large part to EB’s Virginia-class and Columbia-class submarines, P&W’s F-35 engines, and Sikorsky’s various helicopter programs – the state’s defense contracts have been growing substantially. Suppliers have been busier than ever, particularly for submarines.

The state’s high level of defense production will likely continue for many years to come, as Connecticut continues to build and maintain

the world’s most sophisticated nuclear submarines, the best military jet engines, and a variety of military helicopters used in the United States and worldwide. Smaller CT companies with defense-related customers will continue to thrive. In sum, the future for the state’s defense economy is extremely bright!

**IV. U.S. Naval Submarine Base New London and the Submarine Industrial Base**

Chief among the reasons to create OMA was the very real probability that the SUBASE in Groton would be closed. Twice, it was targeted by the DOD for closure in the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. Twice, *Team Connecticut*, a group of public and private sector individuals, got organized and worked tirelessly to reverse the almost certain closure of the base. Today, the primary task of OMA is to do proactively what *Team Connecticut* had to do reactively in the BRAC rounds of 1993 and 2005. We don’t want to wage this battle again.

The predictable economic catastrophe associated with the potential closure of the SUBASE is obvious to anyone familiar with southeastern Connecticut. The loss of the positive effects we realize from the base, as it generates over \$6B in annual economic impacts and over 30,000 jobs, would be devastating. The ripple effect throughout the state would simply be the reverse of what we experience today. Hundreds of small businesses deriving their business and clientele from the base would go under. Without this economic anchor, the regional economy would be severely impacted, in every industry cluster.

***Creating Military Value***

It is clear that the DOD will continue to make adjustments to force structure and military bases. However, another formal BRAC round

is not currently requested by DOD, and Congress continues to resist this politically difficult process. Subject matter experts widely believe DOD will eventually request another BRAC round. However, future BRAC rounds may be much different from previous rounds. Previous rounds focused on cost savings and strategic basing. Future rounds will likely add new criteria, including the quality of host community public schools, state-level efforts to address military spouse unemployment and licensure reciprocity, and relocations required due to climate change and sea level rise.

OMA will continue to closely monitor developments in BRAC requests and basing criteria. And OMA will continue to focus on developing and executing strategic initiatives to enhance the *military value* of the base in preparation for the next BRAC round whenever it comes.

In 2007, the Connecticut General Assembly authorized \$40 million for future investments in *military value* at the SUBASE to protect it from closure. Since then, funding has been directed to several carefully selected projects. This strategy is built on the criteria used by prior BRAC commissions. It aims to assess and enhance the *base's military value*, thereby decreasing the likelihood it will be targeted for closure. By increasing *military value* in operations, infrastructure, and efficiency, we reduce the likelihood of closure because DOD simply can't afford to recreate that strategic capacity anywhere else. It's not about sunk cost. It's about current and future *military value*.

Today the SUBASE is undergoing a remarkable transformation as old infrastructure is demolished and replaced with modern capacity. People familiar with the SUBASE recognize its ongoing dramatic transformation into a modern campus of new buildings specifically designed for unique operations, specialized training and high-tech

support functions associated with producing and maintaining our nation's submarine force.

Working in a close partnership with Navy officials in Connecticut and at the Pentagon, OMA has established a legal framework through which the state can transfer funds directly to the Navy for carefully selected projects at the SUBASE. Connecticut was the first state to develop such a process.

In May 2019, Governor Ned Lamont participated in the formal change of command ceremony at SUBASE New London. In his remarks, he reconfirmed the state's unwavering commitment to enhancing the *military value* of the SUBASE. While the state had a new Governor and the SUBASE a new commanding officer, the innovative investments and unprecedented partnership endures.

Previous state-funded projects have included the construction of new buildings to support operations and maintenance, construction of training equipment, installation of a new high-efficiency boiler for base-wide steam utilities, and purchases of land and structures for encroachment mitigation on both the northern and southern perimeters of the base and in the Navy's area of operations within the Thames River. The state funded a complete road renovation leading to the main gate, significantly improving public safety, traffic management and physical security. Town of Groton leaders voted to give this new road the honorary name "Submarine Capital Avenue" as the gateway to the Submarine Base and Submarine Force Library and Museum. Collectively, these projects represent a wholly unique partnership with the Navy in diverse and creative areas of base improvements.





Photo by Mark Jones

In 2015, the State Bond Commission authorized OMA to provide funding to the Navy for early planning of a microgrid to be developed on the base. This microgrid will provide resilient infrastructure and energy security for base operations and potentially reduce the operating cost of the base by incorporating clean cogeneration capacity and highly efficient power controls and distribution systems. In response to the state's proposal, the Secretary of the Navy agreed to provide staff authority and expertise. The Secretary sent delegations to meet with state and local officials to advance the microgrid project.

Fuel cell construction is complete. The microgrid, with a high-tech integrated distribution and monitoring system, is expected to be fully operational in 2024. The project was initiated with funding from OMA, then with a larger grant from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. The total value of this project is projected to be close to \$100M over the life of several agreements, including an Enhanced Use Lease (EUL), Energy Savings Performance Contract (ESPC), Long-term Power

Purchase Agreements (PPA) and other Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) agreements. This project reflects an impressive collection of innovative financing tools and creative partnering between public and private sector organizations, all dedicated to creating affordable, resilient energy security for the SUBASE.

The State Bond Commission also authorized OMA to fund the removal of a derelict floating dock on the Town of Waterford's shore of the Thames River. This abandoned structure was removed to create additional maneuvering room and a turning basin for the much longer Block 5 Virginia class submarines to be homeported at the SUBASE beginning in 2025.

As important as these ongoing state-funded investments are, they represent only a small fraction of the military construction projects underway on the base. Since 2005, there has been over \$500M worth of planning, demolition, and construction projects at the SUBASE and approximately \$1B in DOD military construction funding is anticipated over the next six years to make major capital improvements to base infrastructure and waterfront piers. About \$15M in project funding was provided by the state. So, the state is an important but modest partner in a much larger ongoing effort to modernize the base and enhance its *military value*.

In Apr. 2022, Governor Lamont joined Navy leaders to sign three Intergovernmental Support Agreements (IGSAs) with state, regional and local governments. These agreements will use shared services and economy of scale in purchasing goods and services to reduce costs for the Navy and enhance base operations.

OMA will continue to work closely with our congressional delegation, state and local officials, regional stakeholders, and Navy leadership to identify future projects and missions as part of our ongoing strategy to enhance the *base's military value* and protect it from closure in a future BRAC round.



*SUBASE Navy Community commemorates anniversary of Sept 11, 2001, Groton, Conn. – The Southeastern Connecticut Navy community commemorated the anniversary of the events of September 11, 2001, and conducted a Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Historic Ship Nautilus & Submarine Force Museum, Monday, September 11, 2023. The ceremony, held on Nautilus Pier, was led by the Chief Petty Officers and prospective Chief Petty Officers of the Groton Area Chief Petty Officers Association. Photo by MC2 Maxwell Higgins.*

### **Connecticut's Submarine Industrial Base**

Central to the argument *Team Connecticut* advanced in the 2005 BRAC was that the SUBASE was not given adequate credit for the *unparalleled synergy* created in the close proximity and interactions among so many public and private submarine-related defense industry and military organizations.

In recent years new organizations have emerged to collaborate and leverage the region's undersea expertise. The National Institute for Undersea Vehicle Technology (NVIUT) is a university-industry partnership that collaborates with the Navy to advance workforce, research, and technology innovations. The Naval and Maritime Consortium (NMC) is a network of companies that collectively

address challenges, share solutions, and collaborate on opportunities in growing national undersea, maritime, and offshore wind supply chains. The OMA Executive Director serves on the advisory boards of both organizations.



*SUBASE Commanding Officer Capt. Kenneth M. Curtin Jr. and divers from Naval Submarine School and Naval Undersea Medical Research Laboratory joined MWR in an underwater ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the opening of the newly renovated SUBASE swimming pool. The renovation took approximately 11 months and improved the pool and aquatics center with many modern energy-saving upgrades. – U.S. Navy Photo*

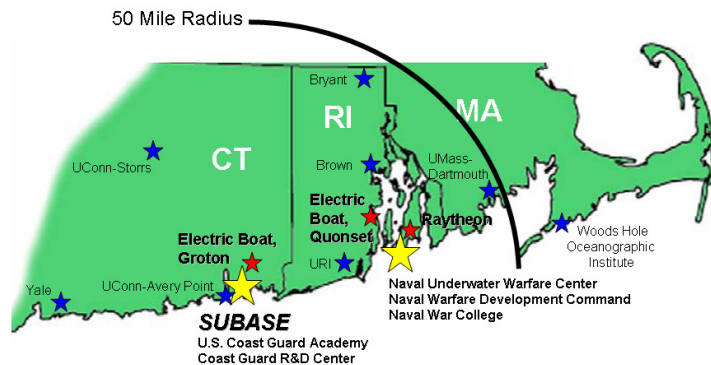
Submarines are designed and built at EB in Groton. All submarine personnel receive basic and advanced training at the Naval Submarine School on SUBASE.

Fleet-wide integrated tactics are developed by the newly established Naval Undersea Warfighting Development Center. The Naval Undersea Warfare Center in nearby Newport, RI, conducts research and development activities in Rhode Island and on the SUBASE. The Naval Undersea Medical Research Labs are located on the base. And the base is home to the Naval Submarine Force Library and Museum and the Historic Ship Nautilus. This is the Submarine Capital of the World, where the nation's submarine

force history and heritage are archived and commemorated. These organizations, and many others, coalesce to create a Submarine Force Center of Excellence – the center of gravity for the nation’s military undersea profession.

One of the greatest affirmations of this synergy is demonstrated in the Navy’s decision to establish the Naval Undersea Warfighting Development Center headquarters at Submarine Base New London. This global command impacts fleet operations and organizations worldwide from its headquarters in southeastern Connecticut.

### The Nation’s Center of Undersea Warfare Excellence



Understanding this synergy’s value led the state to enter into assistance agreements with EB as the nation’s premier manufacturer of undersea platforms and technologies. In 2007, the state helped EB refurbish dry docks in its Groton shipyard. The state’s \$9.9M investment helped EB complete a \$65M renovation project that helped keep submarines in Connecticut and brought other business to the region. Since 2008, EB has generated billions in sales and hundreds of millions in wages related to submarine work performed in these dry docks. That work includes overhaul, repair, maintenance, modernization, and post-shakedown availability. These depot-level facilities, in such close proximity to

the SUBASE, are also a positive consideration that a future BRAC commission will take into account when assessing the total *military value* of the SUBASE.

Subsequently, the state granted EB \$15M to help purchase the former Pfizer headquarters buildings and campus in New London. This major expansion has given EB the space needed for its work in designing the new *Columbia-class* replacement for the aging *Ohio-class* strategic ballistic missile submarines (SSBN). Since 2011, EB has hired thousands of engineers and designers. The building also accommodates a workforce to produce ongoing technology upgrades for the *Virginia-class* submarines. This facility has already reached its capacity as new employees are being added to the industrial base in New London.

In Oct. 2014, the state announced an agreement with EB to help finance the company’s expansion in Groton. Under the terms of this agreement, the Department of Economic and Community Development provided a \$10 million grant to EB in support of this \$31.5M capital expansion project to purchase and renovate a building in Groton. This new space was needed to accommodate 200 new purchasing and supply chain management jobs.

In 2019, as previously described, EB held a groundbreaking ceremony for a massive \$852M shipyard expansion project to prepare for the construction of *Columbia-class* nuclear-powered SSBNs to replace the decommissioning *Ohio-class* submarines. All the new *Columbia-class* submarines will be assembled in the Groton shipyard.

While investments in our submarine industrial base are concentrated in southeastern Connecticut, the impacts are state-wide. For example, in the *Virginia-class* program, almost 400 suppliers are dispersed throughout the state. Altogether, they supply over \$1B worth of goods and services over five years. As we

seek to maintain production of *Virginia*-class submarines at two or more per year, the positive impacts on our state economy will be pervasive. And the new *Columbia*-class submarines will further enhance this economic impact and create thousands of high-end jobs. The direct and indirect employment related to submarine construction and repair is forecast to last for decades.

## **V. The National Coast Guard Museum**

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) is the only Armed Service that does not have a national museum. On Apr. 5, 2013, after a decade of false starts and failed attempts, the Commandant of the Coast Guard announced the decision to build a National Coast Guard Museum (NCGM) in downtown New London. The National Coast Guard Museum Association (NCGMA), a non-profit organization chartered to build the museum, proposed a state-of-the-art building at the head of the New London City Pier. It will be adjacent to Union Station, the Greyhound bus station, and Cross Sound and Fisher’s Island Ferry landings. The State Bond Commission authorized up to \$20M in state funding to build a pedestrian bridge to connect the museum with all elements of New London’s multi-modal transportation hub.

The Governor directed all state agencies to collaborate in this undertaking and to help the USCG and the City of New London advance the project. He also directed the OMA to coordinate the efforts of state agencies on his behalf.

The State Bond Commission approved \$500,000 for advanced engineering and design of the pedestrian bridge and authorized the DECD to enter into an assistance agreement with the NCGMA. The State of Connecticut, the City of New London, USCG and NCGMA negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement to clearly define roles and responsibilities in this partnership to build the museum.

State agencies worked closely with project stakeholders to complete the Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) as required by the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act. The EIE authorized detailed engineering and design to proceed on the pedestrian bridge portion of the project.

Much of the financing for the \$100M museum is being raised in a national fundraising campaign coordinated by the NCGMA. On Aug. 19, 2022, a ceremonial Keel Laying event was held in New London to mark the beginning of a bulkhead and fill project to improve public access and create space needed for the museum. The event included an announcement of \$50 million in federal funding to support the project.

In March 2023 the OMA facilitated the transfer of \$1M to the USCG Academy (USCGA) to address an issue of great concern in historic preservation. The USCGA Library has a special collection area to hold historic documents, including documents signed by Alexander Hamilton, regarded as the founder of the USCG. The collections area does not have an appropriate climate-controlled environment to preserve historic artifacts and documents. The purpose of this funding is to protect and preserve priceless historic documents of irreplaceable value to the Coast Guard, State of Connecticut, and the United States of America. The State recognized that the histories of the Coast Guard and the State of Connecticut are so entwined they cannot be separated, and it is therefore in the state’s interest to preserve this history at the USCGA. The design and construction of a new special collection facility is now in progress.

Related to the National Coast Guard Museum project is the Thames River Heritage Park (TRHP) designation for the New London Harbor. Centuries of American maritime history at sites along the shores of the Thames River is connected by a water taxi service. The TRHP Foundation obtained three surplus 40-foot USN utility boats to



provide this service and become part of the maritime heritage exhibit. The OMA Executive Director serves on the TRHP Foundation Board of Directors and worked with local officials to obtain the authentic Navy boats which provide waterborne access to Thames River historic sites, to eventually include the Submarine Force Museum and future National Coast Guard Museum.

The Connecticut Port Authority granted the Town of Groton a \$750,000 grant through the Small Harbor Improvement Project Program (SHIPP) to construct a floating pier at the Submarine Force Library & Museum to receive TRHP boats. This new pier should be operational for the 2024 summer season. In the years ahead these Coast Guard and Navy museums, connected by the Thames River, will become the TRHP major anchor sites and are expected to draw tens of thousands of people to southeastern Connecticut.



National Coast Guard Museum planned for downtown New London waterfront.  
Photo courtesy of National Coast Guard Museum Association



Pier 32 ribbon cutting marks latest step in modernization of SUBASE New London waterfront Groton, Conn. — Navy leadership, local elected leaders, and friends of the Submarine Force and Naval Submarine Base (SUBASE) New London celebrated the project completion and operational readiness of the base’s new Pier 32 during a ribbon cutting ceremony November 21, 2022. The nearly \$70-million pier is almost twice the width of the pier it replaced and can comfortably berth a Virginia Class submarine on either side. The completion of the nearly 26-month construction project marks the latest step in the modernization of SUBASE New London waterfront. Photo by MC2 Maxwell Higgins

## **VI. Quality of Life and Military Service in Connecticut**

Advocating for service members and their families has become one of the most important roles of OMA. Military families stationed in Connecticut for duty assignments and training enjoy supportive local communities, excellent public schools, and the unique experience of living in New England. Families in transition occasionally need reasonable accommodations, and OMA actively engages state agencies and local organizations on their behalf.

OMA worked with regional leaders at LEARN (a regional educational service center) and the Military Superintendent’s Liaison Committee

to make charter and magnet schools more available to military families. The DOD tends to transfer families in the summer months to avoid moves during the school year. However, the unintended consequence of this policy is that newly arriving military families often can't establish residency in time to compete in the drawing/lottery for seats in charter and magnet schools. Area superintendents implemented a program to hold back a number of seats to be made available to highly mobile families when they arrive later in the summer months. This benefits military families, giving them a level playing field to compete for seats in these unique educational programs.



*Gold Star Family members, Sailors from Naval Submarine Base New London (SUBASE) and base tenant commands, and local officials and community members came to together at the base's Gold Star Family Field September 21, 2023, to unveil a monument and to toll the field's bell in honor of those families and their service members lost. Photo by MC2 Maxwell Higgins*

The State of Connecticut is an active member of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. This national organization recognizes the unique challenges military

children face as members of families in transition. Making reasonable accommodations for these children in matters such as immunizations, physicals, and administrative and academic documentation reduces the stress and challenges associated with the many relocations imposed on military families.

The OMA Executive Director served on the outreach steering committee for the Military Child Education Coalition in Connecticut. This organization facilitates training and awareness of teachers, healthcare providers and other community leaders to the unique challenges children in military families face. Deployments, relocations, separations, and service-related disabilities all take a toll on children and through awareness and training we enable communities to better recognize and respond to these issues.

In Aug. 2021, Governor Lamont visited the SUBASE to meet with military leaders, military spouses, and community leaders to sign into law an Act that expanded economic opportunities for licensed professionals in Connecticut. The new law directs licensing agencies to grant licenses to professionals moving into Connecticut and explicitly identifies military spouses arriving with professional licenses in good standing from other states. The law also directs commissioners to investigate existing interstate compacts to determine if membership in such compacts can further expedite employment for military spouses.

OMA contributed significant time and resources to help the Town of East Lyme and the Connecticut National Guard complete a DOD-funded Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) to identify compatibility issues that arise from training operations in proximity to current and future municipal development. This study guides the Town planners in preventing encroachment and protecting the shared benefits of having two major military installations in their municipality.

A similar DOD-funded JLUS was completed with the municipalities surrounding the SUBASE in Groton. A JLUS Implementation Committee was formed to take the actions recommended in this study. The OMA Executive Director serves as chairman of the Implementation Committee. A subsequent project related to the JLUS was a follow-on study investigating impacts expected in the regional housing market related to significant growth at EB as civilian and military families are added to the workforce in southeastern Connecticut. And a new project is underway examining parking and transportation challenges and opportunities created by the expansion of facilities and workforce at EB.

Working with the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut, annual military appreciation events have been established in southeastern Connecticut to honor service members from all military branches. These venues offer excellent opportunities to showcase the supportive relationships and professional partnerships established between the state and our military communities. OMA has been closely involved with these initiatives.

In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, the Navy, the Coast Guard, and the National Guard, OMA orchestrated an annual Military Orientation Day to expose future community leaders to all of the military branches in eastern Connecticut. The day includes an orientation at the SUBASE, a tour of a nuclear-powered submarine, a tour of the USCG Academy or USCG Station New London, and visits to several National Guard facilities throughout southeastern Connecticut. Weather permitting, air transportation is provided by National Guard Black Hawk helicopters, ground transportation is donated by a local livery service, and waterborne transportation by the USCG. This program is designed to educate future community leaders on Connecticut-based military missions, ongoing operations, economic impacts, and civic contributions to the region. These

future leaders can, in turn, inform other people within their spheres of influence.

The OMA Executive Director was a founding board member of the Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition and now serves on its Advisory Council. This newly formed non-profit advocates for the region's economy's entertainment, arts, and cultural sectors. Military art, history and performance units have played an instrumental role in the region, and having the military represented in the organization's leadership reflects an appreciation of how the military is so deeply ingrained in the social, civic, and economic landscape of Connecticut.

## **VII. Conclusion**

Connecticut's Office of Military Affairs demonstrates an efficient model for achieving tangible strategic outcomes. Since it was established, the office produced a partnership with the Navy that was unprecedented in the United States. The SUBASE is now in a much better position to withstand another round of BRAC. The Connecticut National Guard and U.S. Coast Guard are realizing and planning for expansions with new facilities to support their missions. The state and City of New London are looking forward to being the home of the National Coast Guard Museum. OMA has helped coordinate consistent and sustained support for increases in defense and military spending, and positive economic impacts within the state. Most importantly, OMA has advanced the *quality of life* and *quality of service* for service members and their families stationed here and deploying to destinations around the world.

The state's diversified defense industries continue to thrive. Connecticut's defense industrial base is thriving due to the high quality and strategic relevance of the products designed and manufactured throughout the state. Our defense industries enjoy

superb reputations for their highly skilled workforces, outstanding management, and efficient business practices.

Residents should be proud of Connecticut's long history as the *Provisions State*. It is a foundational part of our character, embedded in the economic fabric of our state and a legacy that should be carefully protected. The Office of Military Affairs will continue to seek opportunities to enhance the military and defense industry presence in Connecticut and advocate for the many organizations and people in our state - particularly military members and their families - who serve and support our nation's defense.



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Robert T. Ross  
Executive Director

Questions or comments concerning this report should be directed to the OMA Executive Director, at (860) 500-2374 or [bob.ross@ct.gov](mailto:bob.ross@ct.gov).





## Appendix A: Biography of OMA Executive Director



**ROBERT T. ROSS**

Bob Ross serves as an advisor to the Governor and legislature on defense industry issues and is the primary liaison to the Connecticut congressional delegation on military and defense matters. He is responsible for coordinating state-wide efforts to protect and promote Connecticut military bases and defense industries. He also represents the state in efforts to enhance the quality of life for service members and military families residing in or deploying from Connecticut.

He is a retired naval officer who piloted aircraft carriers and guided missile cruisers before directing public affairs for the United States Sixth Fleet, encompassing naval operations ashore and at sea in the Mediterranean, European and North African areas of responsibility. He also served as a spokesman at the Pentagon and was director of community and media relations for the United States Atlantic Fleet, coordinating public affairs for over 250 ships homeported at 13 major naval bases.

He holds an M.A. in National Security and Strategy from the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, RI. and an M.A. in Public Policy and Administration from the University of Connecticut. As a former City Administrator for the City of Cripple Creek, Colorado, and former First Selectman (Mayor) of the Town of Salem, Connecticut, he has decades of experience in federal, state and municipal government. He is a Trustee of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut, former Commissioner on the Connecticut Maritime Commission, and former President of the national Association of Defense Communities. He is a former Adjunct Professor of Public Policy in the UCONN Graduate School and recipient of the UCONN Distinguished Alumni award for continued commitment and excellence in public administration.

## Appendix B: Statutory Authority of the Connecticut Office of Military Affairs

Enacted June 19, 2015

Sec. 32-58b. Office of Military Affairs established. Duties of executive director. (a) There is established an Office of Military Affairs within the Department of Economic and Community Development for administrative purposes only. The Office of Military Affairs shall promote and coordinate state-wide activities that enhance the quality of life of all branches of military personnel and their families and to expand the military and homeland security presence in this state.

(b) The Governor, in consultation with the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, shall appoint an executive director to manage the daily activities and duties of the Office of Military Affairs. The executive director shall have the necessary qualifications to perform the duties of said office, including, but not limited to, having prior military experience, and having attained the rank of a field grade or senior officer within a branch of the armed forces. The Governor shall give preference to any person with the necessary training and experience who has served in the Navy or who has knowledge or prior experience with the federal Base Realignment and Closure or "BRAC" process. Within available appropriations, the executive director shall: (1) Appoint, employ and remove such assistants, employees and personnel as deemed necessary for the efficient and effective administration of the activities of the office; (2) coordinate state and local efforts to prevent the closure or downsizing of Connecticut military facilities, particularly United States Naval Submarine Base-New London, located in Groton; (3) maximize the state's input into the federal Base Realignment and Closure or "BRAC" process, including, but not limited to, (A) acting as liaison to the state's congressional delegation on defense, military and BRAC issues, and (B) coordinating the activities of consultants hired by the state to assist in monitoring activities related to BRAC; (4) encourage the relocation of military missions to the state; (5) coordinate state and local efforts to enhance the quality of life of all branches of military personnel stationed in or deploying from Connecticut and their families living or working in Connecticut; (6) review and make recommendations for state policies that affect Connecticut's military facilities and defense and homeland security industries; (7) coordinate state, regional and local efforts to encourage the growth of Connecticut's defense and homeland security industry; (8) serve as an advocate for service members and their families to other state agencies; (9) initiate and sustain collaborative partnerships with local military commanders; (10) consult with the Department of Economic and Community Development on proposed financial assistance agreements with defense and homeland security firms; and (11) prepare and submit a report of activities, findings and recommendations annually to the Governor and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce and public safety, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.