

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

Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2023-2024



Robert T. Ross
Executive Director

Table of Contents

I. Introduction	1
II. Key Defense Issues for the Nation and State	2
III. Connecticut Defense Industry Outlook	9
IV. U.S. Naval Submarine Base New London and the Submarine Industrial Base	17
V. The National Coast Guard Museum	20
VI. Quality of Life and Military Service in Connecticut	22
VII. Conclusion	25
Appendix A: Biography of OMA Executive Director	26
Appendix B: Statutory Authority of the Connecticut Office of Military Affairs	26

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, Russia's war against Ukraine has continued with no end in sight. Although Russia has had terrible losses, in October 2023 it had twice the number of troops in Ukraine as it had at the outset of the invasion. The United States has continued to support Ukraine by sending it large numbers of military weapons and ammunition.

Separately, the Middle East blew up on October 7 of 2023 when Hamas invaded Israel and killed some 1,200 Israelis – mostly young men and women. It started a war against Gaza, killing many thousands of Palestinian civilians. The Israeli attacks have continued through 2023 and into 2024, without relenting.

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 most of 2023. The Russian invasion was the largest attack against a country since World War II. By mid-2023 some 8 million Ukrainians had been displaced within their country; about 8.2 million had gone to other countries. It has been the largest refugee crisis since World War II.

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, since the war began in February 2022 and until April of 2024, the U.S. Congress has approved five bills amounting to \$175 billion for Ukraine. Dozens of other countries, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), have also provided significant amounts of aid to Ukraine.

Interestingly, a large amount of the funds for Ukraine is spent in the United States. It pays for American factories and workers to produce the weapons and ammunition that are either sent to

Ukraine, or that replenish the U.S. weapons and ammunition stocks that the Pentagon has drawn down on during the war. An analysis by the American Enterprise Institute has determined that aid to Ukraine is funding defense manufacturing in some 70 cities in the United States,

By mid-2024 the Biden Administration has provided Ukraine with a long line of many military capabilities, including Abrams battle tanks, anti-aircraft missiles, artillery shells, coastal defense ships, cluster munitions, and advanced surveillance and radar systems.

Ukraine: In early 2023 Ukraine prepared for a counteroffensive that might break through Russian troops in eastern Ukraine. The counteroffensive got underway in early June. Although there were substantial losses to the Russian soldiers, there was unfortunately no breakthrough for the Ukrainian military. The Russian generals had prepared for significant defenses during the winter and spring. In fact, by November the Russians had gained more territory than the Ukrainian soldiers. Despite its huge losses, in fall of 2023 Russia had twice the number of troops that Ukraine had at the beginning of the counteroffensive. In late 2023 and early 2024 many in the U.S. Congress began to say that it may not be worth to send more aid to Ukraine. The Biden Administration and NATO members opposed that notion. Meanwhile, Russian generals and President Vladimir Putin believed that time was on their side.

Middle East: The Middle East was relatively quiet in the summer and early fall of 2023. But, as stated above, a Hamas surprise attack on Oct. 7 killed 1,200 young Israelis – the deadliest day in the history of Israel. Some 240 Israelis were taken as hostages. Israel immediately struck back, with air attacks and ground invasion of northern Gaza. At the end of November there was a negotiated pause of the fighting and Israel got the release of some 100 hostages. The vicious fighting then resumed, with a soaring death toll of tens of thousands of Palestinians civilians, mostly women and children. At the outset Israel refused to let aid for the civilians’

travel into Gaza. The Biden Administration backed Israel after the cruel Hamas attack. But by the end of the year U.S. officials were urging Israel to help get aid to the civilians. Into early 2024 the Israel military continued its air and ground attacks into Gaza. By the end of 2023, the Gaza Health Ministry reported that the number killed in Gaza reached 20,000. By June 19, 2024, 37,396 people had been killed since October of 2023, according to the Gaza Health Ministry as reported by the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. It remains unclear how the conflict will end.

Climate Change. 2023 was the hottest year on record. Global temperatures have not been this high in 125,000 years, as reported by the Council on Foreign Affairs. NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) Administrator Bill Nelson said in January 2024: “NASA and NOAA’s [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] global temperature report confirms what billions of people around the world experienced last year; we are facing a climate crisis. From extreme heat, to wildfires, to rising sea levels, we can see our Earth is changing.” Also, Deputy Defense Secy. Kathleen Hicks said, “Climate change is a global issue. It knows no borders, nor boundaries. One thing is clear, none of us can tackle the climate change alone.” She said this at the Climate and Defense Summit of the Americas on Aug. 22-23, 2024, at the Naval Academy at Annapolis, MD. Climate change is of particular importance to Navy bases on or near the water, such as Naval Submarine Base New London (SUBASE) in Connecticut. Although the SUBASE is on the Thames River, it is not on the coastline and benefits from some protection provided by Long Island and the Long Island Sound. The Biden Administration has engaged the climate crisis in the Inflation Reduction Act, signed into law in August 2022. The law invests hundreds of billions of dollars in clean energy, electric vehicles, environmental justice, carbon removal, and many other matters.

Space Race. At the end of 2023, 77 countries had space agencies and 16 countries could launch payloads into space. The main interest is the moon. In August 2023, Russia's moon shot was a disappointment when its lander crashed into the moon's surface. A few days later, India became the fourth country to land an unmanned vehicle on the moon. And two weeks later, India launched a mission to study the sun. China and the United States have ambitious moon plans. NASA is aiming to have astronauts return to the moon by 2025.

General Stephen Whiting, commander of the U.S. Space Command, expressed concern about China in a visit to the Navy Indo-Pacific Command in April 18-28, 2024. He said,

“The People’s Republic of China is moving at breathtaking speed in space, and they are rapidly developing a range of counter-space weapons to hold at risk our space capabilities, but they’re also using space to make their terrestrial forces more precise, more lethal, and more far-ranging . . . the value of space is just foundational to all that we do in the military arena, and so we must protect and defend our space capabilities.”

Connecticut Defense Funding

Connecticut did very well in the FY 2024 defense authorization and appropriations bills. The former -- the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) – was passed by Congress on Dec. 14, 2023, and was signed into law on Dec. 22, 2023, by President Joe Biden. The defense appropriations bill was part of the Consolidated

Appropriations Act, 2024. Congress passed it on March 8, 2024, and was signed into law by President Biden on March 9, 2024.

On Dec. 13, 2023, just before the NDAA was voted on in Congress, Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal, a member of the Senate Armed Forces Committee, stated the following in part: “Historic investments in defense platforms made in Connecticut show continued confidence in our state’s spectacular workforce. This strong bipartisan national security package protects against threats to America now, and in coming years. It underscores a strong commitment to bolstering advanced technologies – submarines, helicopters, and fighter jets – investing in workforce development, and taking care of our military families.”

Blumenthal strongly advocated funding “for Connecticut’s submarine industry that guarantees our nation’s strategic advantages in undersea warfare while growing Connecticut’s jobs and economy,” Blumenthal said in his statement.

Following are key items that Blumenthal worked for and got in the FY 2024 NDAA:

- \$10.3B to fund two Virginia-class submarines in FY 2024; an additional \$244M in industrial base analysis and sustainment support that will ensure growth for the submarine industrial base.
- \$5.8B for ongoing design and construction of the Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine, including \$400M for the submarine industrial workforce development.
- \$1.69B for 16 CH-53K King Stallion helicopters; these and the other helicopters listed below are made by Sikorsky.
- \$48M for HH-60W Combat Rescue helicopters for capability upgrades and modernization.
- \$669M for 24 UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters.
- \$92M for UH-60M advanced procurement funding.

- \$153.1M to fund 26 UH-60L and UH-60V Black Hawk helicopters.
- \$9.42B for 83 F-35 Joint Strike fighters for the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps, with engines built by Pratt & Whitney (P&W).
- \$613M in F-35 advance procurement funding.

Also, in the defense appropriations bill \$497M was for the F135 Engine Core Upgrade (ECU) for P&W. And, importantly, the Department of Defense (DOD) approved new contracts for P&W to remain as the sole provider of the F-35 fighter. “This bill will allow Pratt & Whitney to deliver the current and future propulsion capabilities that will keep the United States and its allies on the cutting edge of fighter engine technology,” said Jill Albertelli, president of Pratt & Whitney Military Engines, in a statement.

Connecticut Rep. John Larson – P&W is located in his congressional district – said in a Dec. 4, 2023, statement, “I am both gratified and proud that the Pentagon is committing to sole source production of the F135 to Pratt & Whitney Aircraft over a costly alternative engine. This is the right decision for our warfighters, partner nations across the globe, and for American taxpayers.”

Connecticut Rep. Joe Courtney, ranking member of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee, said, “After years of consistent effort by the Connecticut delegation to proactively secure funding to upgrade the existing engine, this award by the Department of Defense validates the critical importance that the employees of Pratt & Whitney deliver to the warfighter. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I look forward to ensuring this modernization program stays on track and will continue to advocate for additional resources needed in years to come.”

Separately, on April 18, 2024, Rep. Courtney spoke on the House floor to mark the graduation of the first three Royal Australian Navy

officers from the Submarine Officer Basic Course at Naval Submarine Base New London. The three began the course in February 2024 after graduating from the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command and Naval Nuclear Power Training Unit.

The three Australian sailors training with the U.S. Navy is a result of AUKUS, the submarine-related working group of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Rep. Courtney is the founder and co-chair of both the bipartisan Friends of Australia Caucus and bipartisan AUKUS Working Group on Capitol Hill. The FY 2023 NDAA provided that the U.S. DOD 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 a U.S. nuclear submarine.

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

Another important matter for Connecticut and the United States is the Inflation Reduction Act, signed into law in 2022. Connecticut Sen. Chris Murphy said the Act, among other things, would provide funds to “conserve, restore, and protect Connecticut’s coastline.” On March 22, 2024, Murphy and Sen. Blumenthal issued a statement on the Department of Treasury’s new guidance for the Offshore Wind Tax Credit: “Offshore wind is crucial to achieving our climate goals and lowering energy costs. For months we have been pushing the Treasury to release this guidance so that bureaucratic red tape doesn’t stand in the way in offshore wind projects in our state. Today’s announcement is great news for the industry in Connecticut and will help us fulfill the true intent of the Inflation Reduction Act – to create good paying jobs, lower costs, and invest in clean energy. “

Defense Contracts

As reported on page 9, Connecticut's defense industrial base had an outstanding year in 2023, with \$21.9B in prime contracts – the exact same amount the Nutmeg state had defense contracts the prior year!

As usual, the large contracts went mostly to Electric Boat (EB), P&W, and Sikorsky. In June 2023 there were \$8.9B in prime contracts to Connecticut companies. In that month, P&W had contracts in the amounts of \$5.5B, \$2.0B, \$888.0M, and \$293.8M, along with smaller contracts for EB and Sikorsky. In August 2023 there were \$3.1B in contracts, mainly because Sikorsky had a contract for \$2.8B. And September saw \$2.4B in contracts: Sikorsky had a contract for \$650.0M, EB had one for \$517.2M, P&W had contracts for \$305.6M and \$220.9M, along with other numerous smaller contracts. These three months accounted for about two-thirds of the year's \$21.9B in defense contracts.

Electric Boat

A subsidiary of General Dynamics, EB was founded in 1899. Its facilities are a shipyard in Groton, Connecticut, a hull fabrication and outfitting facility in Quonset Point, Rhode Island, and a design and engineering facility in New London, CT.

As he does each year, EB President Kevin Graney met with state and national legislators on February 22, 2024, to report on the company's current situation, particularly the company's need for employment.

"We are hiring across the board," Graney said. "We have careers in every line of work you can imagine." He added that about half of the new people would be in trades, about 1,900 in Quonset Point, and another 1,100 at the Groton shipyard. The 2,000 hires would

mainly be engineers and designers, and they would be working at New London.

EB's currently has some 14,000 employees. Graney stated that about 5,300 people were hired in 2023. He said there's a need for about 5,000 new employees every year for approximately the next 20 years. He stated, "These jobs are for the long haul."

EB has two major programs under way: building Virginia-class attack submarines and larger Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines. The Columbia-class will replace Ohio-class submarines that will be retired in the years to come. Graney said that the contract payments for work on the Columbia-class subs have surpassed those of the Virginia-class boats.

Graney also said that manufacturing overall has depleted in recent years nationwide. Because of this, the local workforce is very important, along with local supply chains. On hand for Graney's briefing was Connecticut's Rep. Courtney. He and Graney gave credit to the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board for funding local workforce, local defense contractors, and local trade schools and high schools for sources of EB's employees. "It's been an amazing team effort," Courtney said at the EB meeting.

Pratt & Whitney

Pratt & Whitney (P&W), a subsidiary of RTX (Raytheon), has over 7,000 of its military engines in service with 34 armed forces worldwide. Its main U.S. military engine is the F135 engine for the 5th generation F-35 Lighting. P&W sees it as the most advanced engine in the world. Building upon that engine is the Engine Core Upgrade (ECU). Stated earlier in this report, DOD provided funds so that the ECU will remain the sole engine for the military F-35 Lighting.

On July 15, 2024, P&W completed the ECU preliminary design review (PDR) affirming that the ECU's design is on schedule, exceeding expectations. "Pratt & Whitney is upgrading the F135 engine with technology from multiple development programs to deliver increased capability and performance for the warfighter," said Chris Johnson, vice president of P&W's F135 program. "Upgrading the F-35's propulsion system to ECU is a critical step toward ensuring the F-35 remains the world's premier air dominance fighter."

Separately, P&W continues to expand its facilities worldwide. For example, on June 20, 2023, at the Paris Air Show, P&W announced that it will launch an affiliate in Casablanca, Morocco, to manufacture detailed static and structural parts for various engine models. Morocco was selected after a worldwide exercise due to its growing hub of aerospace companies, cost of business, and trained, available talent. "Morocco offers many benefits for aerospace manufacturing," said Maria Della Posta, president of Pratt & Whitey Canada. "The growing aerospace community in Casablanca ensures a highly valuable talent pool, a positive economic environment, and the support from Morocco's government."

Another example is a facility P&W has in Puerto Rico. It started in 2003 with some 40 workers at a small location in the city of Mayaguez. One of the first workers was Jorge Morales, a mechanical engineer. By December 2023 he was the Deputy General Manager at the expanded location in Aguadilla, with more than 1,000 employees. "The evolution from then to now has been massive," Morales has said. Now, the facility supports the company's military propulsion systems. But it also supports STEM education efforts in their local community. It partners with the University of Puerto Rico and sponsors the Turbolab, an aerospace laboratory that started in 2022. "We treat our initiatives within the community and schools the same as any other project that we do

with engines," said Morales. "We need to be consistent with our efforts to build a long-term pipeline of talent into our site here."

Closer to home, on March 24, 2023, P&W announced its plans to invest \$225M through 2028 for a sustainment facility in Oklahoma City, OK. It will be a hub for depot operations for all P&W military engines, including those for the F-35, C-17, F-22, F-15, F-16, and B-52. The Oklahoma City site is part of a global sustainment network, including U.S. locations at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point in North Carolina, Naval Air Station Jacksonville Florida, and West Palm Beach. P&W already has a F135 engine Heavy Maintenance Center in Oklahoma City.

Sikorsky

Sikorsky is a subsidiary of Lockheed Martin. It celebrated its 100th anniversary during the Paris Air Show at Le Bourget in the week of June 19, 2023. Igor Sikorsky actually founded his aircraft company on March 23, 1923.

Sikorsky's history crossed paths with the Paris Air Show. Fifty-seven years ago in 1967, two Sikorsky HH-3E search and rescue helicopters made the first non-stop helicopter flight across the Atlantic Ocean, from New York over London and finally to Le Bourget during the 27th Paris Air Show.

"Today Sikorsky helicopters around the world make long-range flights in some of the toughest conditions," said Sikorsky President Paul Lemmo. "Those HH-SE flights in 1967 – with refueling supported by a Lockheed HC-130P Hercules tanker – were a testament to the ingenuity and innovation that began 100 years ago with our founder Igor Sikorsky. Innovation is central to our 21st Century security mission of supporting our customers with systems to address their most difficult challenges."

“I was there with my father to welcome the crew of the U.S. Air Force’s HH-3E, the original ‘Jolly Green Giant,’ when it arrived in Le Bourget,” said Sergie Sikorsky, one of Igor’s sons.

Sikorsky aircraft have supported missions in Europe for decades. For example, the German Armed Forces have operated CH-53G heavy lift helicopters in Germany and during missions for more than 50 years. Sikorsky has proved its reputation as the world leader in reliability, safety, and mission effectiveness with Black Hawk and MH-60R Seahawk helicopters.

As an appropriate start to Sikorsky’s 100th anniversary, on Jan. 23, 2023, Sikorsky delivered its 5,000th variant UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter to the U.S. Army. “Sikorsky, as a company, has been forged by the Black Hawk,” said President Lemmo. “The Black Hawk and its variants deliver when reliability and performance are non-negotiable.”

Although Sikorsky is known in Europe for its Black Hawk and other helicopters, it has customers around the world. For example, Sikorsky celebrated its 100th anniversary in April 2023 with its Brazilian customer at the Latin America Aerospace and Defense and Security (LAAD) trade show. Adam Schierholz, Sikorsky Latin America regional executive, highlighted Sikorsky’s nearly 70-year relationship with Brazil. It dates back to 1958 when the Brazilian Air Force acquired four H-19D helicopters for search and rescue operations. Today, the Brazilian Army and Air Force have a fleet of UH-60L/M Black Hawks, while the Navy has S-70B Seahawks.

Clearly, Connecticut-based companies have tremendous national and international reach, shaping defense manufacturing on a global scale.

III. Connecticut Defense Industry Outlook

As stated earlier, the Connecticut defense industrial base received a very good \$21.9B in prime contracts in calendar year 2023.

Interestingly, this is exactly the same amount for Connecticut's defense contracts in the 2022 calendar year!

Although high, this number is somewhat conservative. It is derived from DOD's daily announcement of contract awards. And DOD's contract announcements apply only to prime contracts with a value of \$7.5M or more. Many thousands of DOD prime contracts with a value less than \$7.5M are not included.

Ever since it was established in 2007, Connecticut's OMA has closely tracked defense contracts from DOD's daily contract listings. Since that time the state's annual defense contracts have often been in the \$7-14B range. However, in the past decades there have been years that were far above that range. This has been mainly due to (1) EB's construction of two Virginia-class submarines each year and the start of Columbia-class submarines; (2) P&W making 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 its renowned Black Hawk helicopters and, more recently, the production of CH-53 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 2014 through 2023. Half of those years have been more than \$20B! The second highest contract in those years was in 2014. In that year, Connecticut defense contracts zoomed to \$27.1B. This was because of a \$17.6 contract awarded to EB for 10 "Block 4" Virginia-class submarines. At the time, it was the largest Navy shipbuilding contract ever awarded.

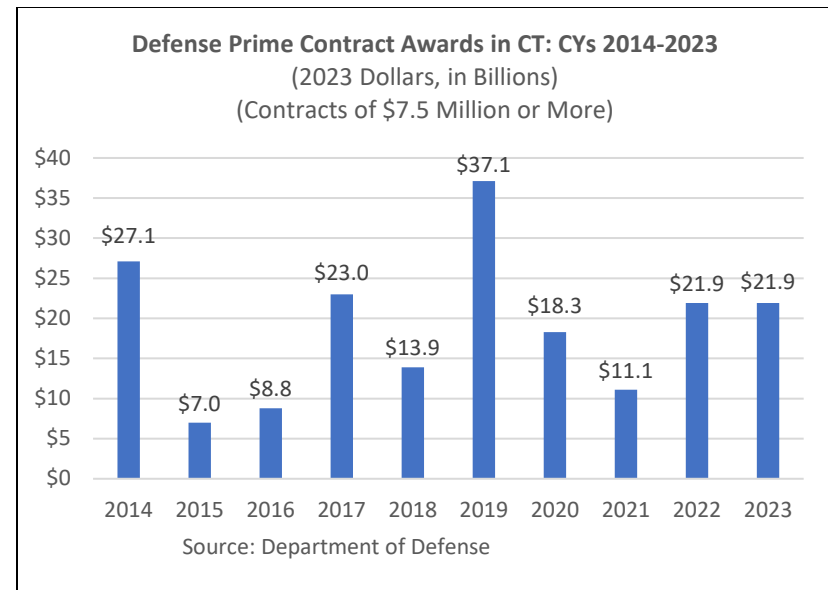


Figure 1

In 2015 and 2016 the contracts dropped to lower levels of \$7.0B and \$8.8B, respectively. But Connecticut defense contracts skyrocketed once more, this time in 2017 with a total of \$23.0B. It was mainly due to \$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 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 starting in 2007. It was mainly the result of a staggering \$22.2B single contract awarded to EB in December of 2019, the Navy's largest single contract ever awarded. The 2019 contract was for nine "Block 5" Virginia-class submarines. Eight of them are having an 84-foot expansion of the hull known as Virginia Payload Module, which increases the submarine's missile capacity.

The 2020 amount of \$18.3B was the fourth highest since 2007. Now, however, the 2022 and 2023 amounts of \$21.9 each are tied for the fourth highest amount, according to OMA's charting of calendar year DOD contracts.

With the significantly high defense contracts in 2014, 2017, 2019, 2022, and 2023, Figure 1 may give the impression of instability in Connecticut's defense industrial base. But this is not the case, for the following reason: The total amounts of contracts announced by DOD are very often greater than the amounts obligated, that is, paid to the contractor when the contracts are awarded. Rather, the contract amounts are very often spread out over many years. This is particularly true for very large contracts.

For example, on June 30, 2023, P&W was awarded an Air Force contract of \$5.5B for F117 Engine Sustainment Support. It was the largest single contract to a Connecticut defense contractor during 2023. However, no funds were obligated at the time of the award. Rather, the funds would be obligated during the time of the work that is expected to be completed by Sept. 30, 2027.

Also, on Oct. 3, 2023, EB received a Navy contract of \$967M for lead yard support, development studies, and design efforts for Virginia-class submarines. At the time of the award only \$1M was obligated. The remainder of the funds would be made over the following year; the work was expected to be completed in October 2024.

In sum, the amounts of money from very large defense contracts are very often spread over one year or many years. This provides stability and predictability for Connecticut's defense industrial base. The stability is prominent in years with modest contract awards. An example is the year 2021 with contract awards of \$11.1B, considerably lower than the previous four years.

Suppliers to Leading Contractors

With construction of Columbia-class submarines underway and the continued work on Virginia-class submarines, the future looks very good for Connecticut's submarine industrial base. However, there has been a significant challenge for suppliers in the state and around the country to keep up with the pace of construction.

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

In February 2024 the Council issued a state-by-state report on sub-contracts. It found that sub-contracts were awarded to 2,698 first tier known submarine industrial base suppliers. The total amount was \$31.7B, spent or contracted to submarine suppliers over the last five years. It does not include funding for the two submarine suppliers: EB and Newport News Shipbuilding. This amount is almost 5.0B higher than a similar report issued in February 2023 at \$26.9B.

For the state of Connecticut, the total amount of purchase order awards over the last five years for major submarine programs -- as compiled by the Council in its February 2024 report -- is 2.0B. This is almost \$1.0B higher than the total amount of purchase order awards in the Council's 2023 report at \$1.1B. Connecticut's significant increase over the prior years is clearly due to the Columbia-class and Virginia-class construction.

Among the products included by small Connecticut companies over past years have been specialized components and materials such as

air revitalization equipment, control valves, specialty filters and alloys, specialized command and control electronics, oxygen generators, microswitches, high speed bearings, and pipe fittings. Many of these products were produced by highly skilled and well-paid workers.



Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont waves from the sail of USS South Dakota (SSN 790) as the Virginia-class attack submarine transits the Thames River to its homeport of Naval Submarine Base New London, July 25, 2024. Lamont led a small group of state and industry leaders on a brief embark of South Dakota to highlight southeastern Connecticut’s impact designing, building, and homeporting U.S. Navy Submarines. South Dakota returned from a regularly scheduled underway. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Maxwell Higgins)

Connecticut’s current \$2.0B cost in submarine products results from increases since a 2020 survey from the Submarine Industrial Base Council, which showed Connecticut with \$864.2M. As stated above,

the substantial increase over the last four years no doubt is due to the Columbia-class and Virginia-class construction requirements.

The Council’s 2024 report also shows that the Nutmeg state has 351 first-tier submarine industrial base suppliers, plus an unknown number of supplier companies. While Connecticut is a major submarine supplier state, it ranks 5th in supplier sub-contract amounts over the past five years at \$2.0B, according to the Council’s report. This is a significant increase because Connecticut ranked 7th in the Council’s 2023 report of \$1.1B, as stated above. Virginia came in 1st place with \$5.8B, followed by California in \$4.8B and Pennsylvania 3rd with \$3.0B.

See Table 1 below, listing the top 10 submarine supplier states by dollar amounts over the past five year as compiled by the Council:

Top U.S. Submarine Supplier States

(By Dollar Amounts, 2019-2024)

1.	Virginia	\$5.8B
2.	California	\$4.8B
3.	Pennsylvania	\$3.0B
4.	Ohio	\$2.3B
5.	Connecticut	\$2.0B
6.	Wisconsin	\$1.7B
7.	Massachusetts	\$1.4B
8.	New York	\$1.2B
9.	New Jersey	\$973M
10.	Illinois	\$820M

Table 1

Interestingly, some of the top 10 sub-contract states increased their amounts along with Connecticut over the past year. For example, Virginia had \$3.8B in submarine contracts in 2023; it increased to \$5.8B in 2024. Wisconsin went from \$874M in 2023 and climbed up to \$1.7B in 2024. These indicate that the increased demand for submarine components is nationwide.

Connecticut has by far the most of submarine suppliers, with 351, followed by Virginia with 278 and Massachusetts at 250. Table 2 below shows Connecticut at the top. While some of the states have large populations – California, Pennsylvania, Texas, New York – three of the top 10 sub-supplier states are in New England: Rhode Island with 109, along with Connecticut and Massachusetts.

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

Top U.S. Submarine Supplier States

(By Number of Suppliers, 2024)

1.	Connecticut	351
2.	Virginia	278
3.	Massachusetts	250
4.	Pennsylvania	176
5.	California	168
6.	New York	145
7.	Illinois	126
8.	Rhode Island	109
9.	Texas	103
10.	New Jersey	102

Table 2

Connecticut's Ranking in Defense Spending

The most recent comprehensive analysis of state-by-state defense spending is *Defense Spending by State, Fiscal Year 2023*. It was released on Oct. 15, 2024, by DOD's Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC). The report is based on research done between March and September of 2024. It is drawn from numerous sources, including DOD's Defense Manpower Data Center and USAspending.gov, which is managed by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Connecticut did very well in the rankings, especially with its relatively small population of 3.6 million compared to other states with much larger populations and many more military bases. It is ranked 6th overall in total defense spending, with \$25.3 billion. Last year it was ranked 7th in the same category and 8th two years ago.

In defense spending as a percentage of state Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Connecticut came in at 3rd place with a percentage of 7.4 per cent. It was the same in last year's report and 4th in the FY 2021 report.

In the important category of defense *contract* spending, Connecticut is ranked 4th with \$24.3 billion. Moreover, it was ranked behind the large states of Texas, Virginia, and California. These three states have numerous military bases, but Connecticut has only one significant military base, the Naval Submarine Base in New London. Last year Connecticut was ranked 6th in the OLDCC report, and 7th in the year before!

On the other hand, Connecticut 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. Again, this category is dominated by states with many large military bases such as Virginia, California, and Texas. Not surprisingly, Connecticut came in 37th in personnel spending and 38th in the

number of defense personnel in the state. These are the same ranking numbers in last year's report.

Figure 2 below shows the ranking for total defense spending, which includes defense contracts and personnel. As stated above, Connecticut comes in 6th with \$25.3B, just below Maryland in 5th with \$27.8B. The top four states are consistently far above Connecticut because of their large amounts of defense contractors and military bases: Texas (\$71.6B), Virginia (\$68.5B), California (\$60.8B), and Florida (\$32.3B).

Interestingly, last year New York had defense spending of \$28.1B and ranked 5th, compared to Connecticut's \$22.3B at number 7. The year before that New York even did better, ranking 4th at \$30.9B. The reason for New York's remarkable positions in defense spending in recent years was mainly due to extremely large DOD contracts for COVID-19 vaccines produced in New York: Pfizer, Inc., and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.

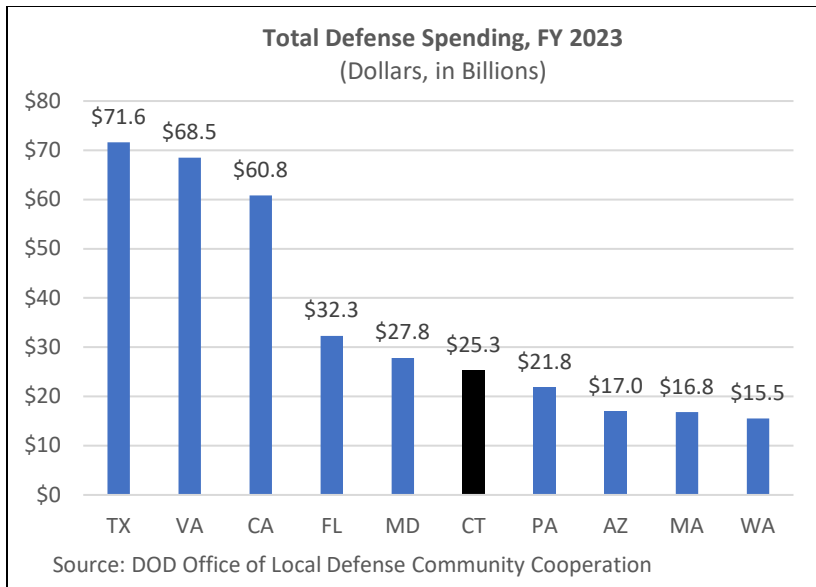


Figure 2

As stated above and as shown in Figure 3 below, Connecticut does well in the ranking of defense spending as a percentage of state GDP in 3rd place at 7.4%. Virginia is at the top, with Hawaii second and Alaska is right behind CT. On average for all states, defense spending comprised 2.6% of the nationwide GDP – about one third of the GDP spending in Connecticut. Of interest, several states that exceeded the 2.6% nationwide average were not among the top recipients of total defense spending: Hawaii, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Alabama, Maine, and Mississippi.

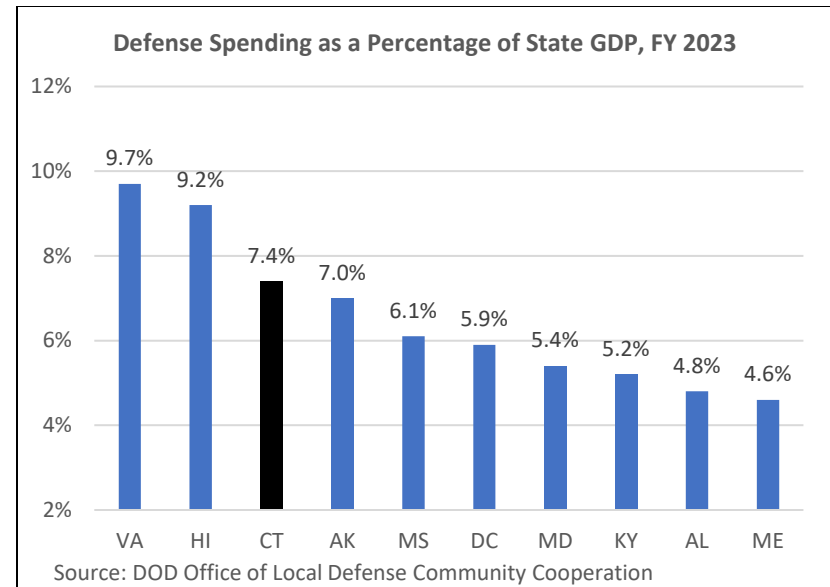


Figure 3

In defense contract spending -- excluding DOD spending on personnel -- CT is ranked 4th at \$24.3B, as stated above. Again, this is two steps up from last year's rank of 6th place at \$22.3B. Two years ago, Connecticut was placed 7th in this category at \$18.4B. Again, it is behind states with much larger populations and more military bases: Texas, Virginia, and California. And even though Florida has a large population and numerous military bases, Connecticut outspent it for DOD contracts, with Florida ranked 5th with defense contract spending at \$22.9B. See Figure 4 below.

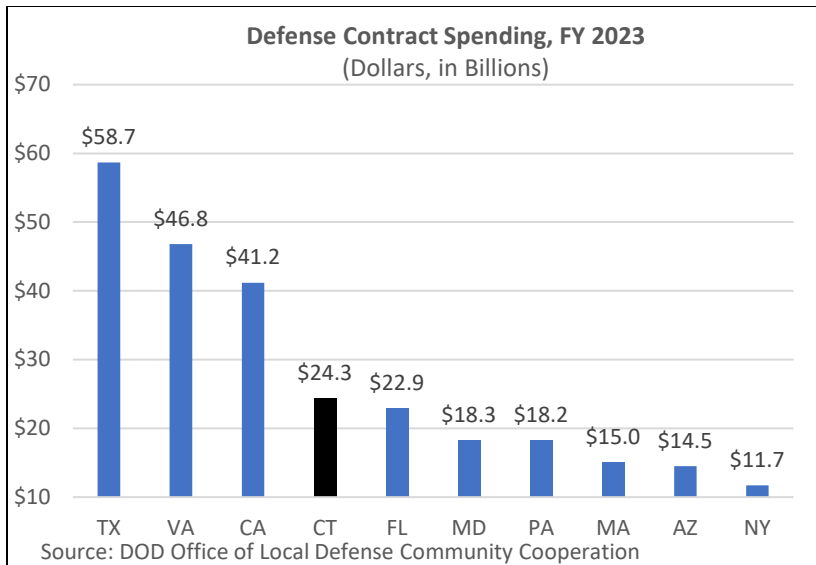


Figure 4

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 2023 per capita defense spending in Connecticut – both for contracts and personnel spending – was \$6,986. Remarkably, the state is ranked second, only behind Virginia at 7,862 per capita and ahead of Hawaii at 6,943 per capita. Of course, Hawaii has a very low population of 1.5 million. Also, Connecticut’s per capita defense spending is almost four times higher than the average state per capita defense spending for the entire United States -- \$1,819.

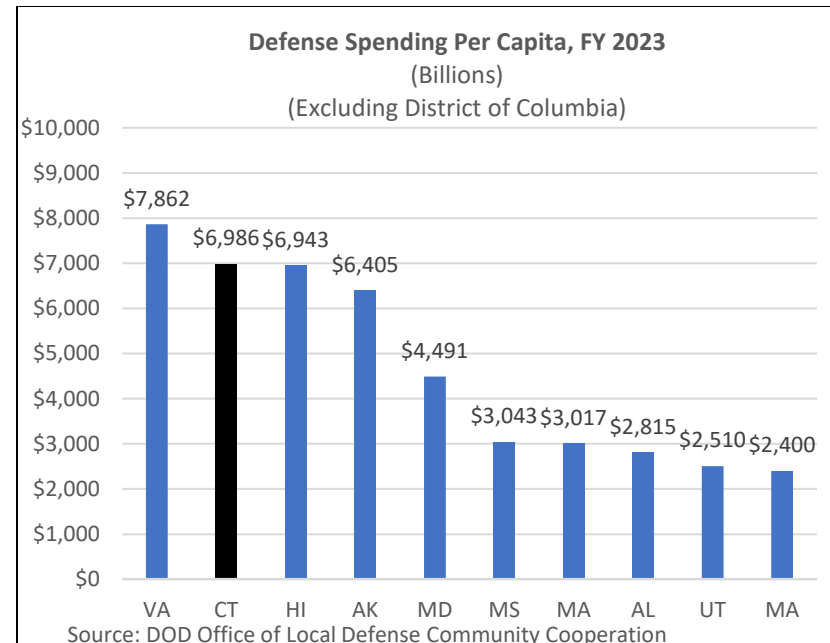


Figure 5

As it has done in prior years, the annual OLDCC report lists the 10 leading defense contractors in each state, based on defense contract spending in the prior fiscal year, in this case FY 2023 – from Oct. 1, 2022, through Sept. 30, 2023. The report for Connecticut shows Electric Boat (General Dynamics) at the top with \$10.5B, followed by P&W (RTX Corporation) at \$8.5B and Sikorsky (Lockheed Martin) at \$4.2B. The amounts for each of these three companies are approximately \$1B over the amounts in the prior year as shown in that OLDCC report. Table 3 shows the entire list in the current report.

Top CT Defense Contractors, FY 2023

1.	Electric Boat	\$10.5B
2.	P&W	\$8.5B
3.	Sikorsky	\$4.2B
4.	Triumph Group	\$67.8M
5.	Ensign-Bickford	\$64.6M
6.	Danbury Mission	\$62.7M
7.	Nutmeg Companies	\$60.6M
8.	Sonalysts	\$48.1M
9.	Gartner	\$34.5M
10.	Emprise Corp.	\$33.2M

Table 3

Finally, the OLDCC report lists the nation’s top 10 defense contract spending locations in FY 2023, and spending amounts for that year. Interestingly, two Connecticut locations are listed: New London shown as 5th at \$10.7B, mainly no doubt due to EB contracts; Hartford listed 7th at \$8.8B, likely because P&W has its headquarters at East Hartford. See Table 4 below.

Top Defense Contract Spending Locations, FY 2023

1.	Tarrant, TX	\$33.5B
2.	Fairfax, VA	\$18.3B
3.	Los Angeles, CA	\$12.0B
4.	San Diego, CA	\$10.9B
5.	New London, CT	\$10.7B
6.	St. Louis, MO	\$9.4B
7.	Hartford, CT	\$8.8B
8.	Jefferson, KY	\$8.1B
9.	Dallas, TX	\$7.6B
10.	District of Columbia	\$7.5B

Table 4

Summary

As stated in this DOD report, the state of Connecticut continues to rank among the leading states nationwide for defense contracting despite its modest population. All the data shown above points to a vibrant defense industrial base providing the nation with critical weapons. Particularly in recent years – due mainly to EB’s Virginia-class and Columbia-class submarines, P&W’s F-35 engines, and Sikorsky’s outstanding helicopters – the state’s defense contracts have been growing substantially. Also, supplier companies have been busier than ever, particularly for submarines.

Connecticut’s high level of defense production will almost surely continue for many years to come. Its well-known companies will continue building and maintaining the world’s most sophisticated submarines, the best military jet engines, and various military helicopters used in the United States and worldwide. Small Connecticut 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.

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, 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.

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 provides 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, became 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 \$125M 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.

Two new projects have been initiated by OMA in 2024. State funding will be used to replace smaller piers at the base to improve port operations and enhance safety for base personnel. The boat launch will also be reconstructed to improve base operations.

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 Ned 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.

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.

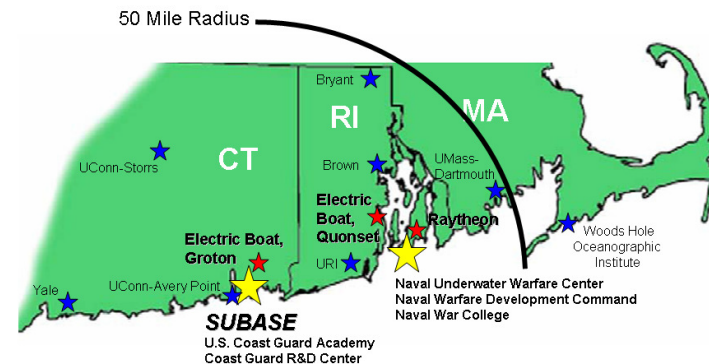
Submarines are designed and built at EB in Groton. All submarine personnel receive basic and advanced training at the Naval Submarine School on SUBASE.

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 secure 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.



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

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.



*Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont shares a moment with U.S. Coast Guard Academy Superintendent Rear Adm. Michael Johnston, during a visit to the Academy library, July 27, 2023. The Governor examined historical documents on display and spoke with staff members at the library.
(U.S. Coast Guard Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Taylor Bacon)*

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 2025 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.

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.

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.



*A Soldier assigned to the Connecticut National Guard's 103rd Security Forces, 103rd Airlift Wing, and another contestant in the 2023 Connecticut SWAT Challenge take off in a helicopter in order to shoot targets as part of the competition at the Hartford Gun Club, East Granby, Conn. Aug. 17, 2023. The Connecticut SWAT Challenge began in 2005 and evolved into a prestigious competition that brings in competitors from all around the country.
(CT National Guard Photo by Timothy Koster)*

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.



Mr. Steve Ricard, Mayor Michael Passero, Mayor of New London, CT, and Angela Clay, pose for a photograph on Cadet Memorial Field at the Coast Guard Academy, New London, Ct, 2 Nov. 2024. The award was given to Mr. Steve Ricard by the Association of Defense Communities to individuals who significantly contribute to their local military communities. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by David Lau.)

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.



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.



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.