

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 941

To increase the number of operational aircraft carriers of the Navy, and  
for other purposes.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 7, 2017

Mr. CONAWAY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the  
Committee on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To increase the number of operational aircraft carriers of  
the Navy, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “12 Carrier Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

6 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

7 (1) The aircraft carrier can fulfill the Navy’s  
8 core missions of forward presence, sea control, en-  
9 suring safe sea lanes, and power projection as well

1 as providing flexibility and versatility to execute a  
2 wide range of additional missions.

3 (2) Forward airpower is integral to the security  
4 and joint forces operations of the United States.  
5 Carriers play a central role in delivering forward air-  
6 power from sovereign territory of the United States  
7 in both permissive and nonpermissive environments.

8 (3) Aircraft carriers provide our Nation the  
9 ability to rapidly and decisively respond to national  
10 threats, as well as conducting worldwide, on-station  
11 diplomacy and providing deterrence against threats  
12 to the United States allies, partners, and friends.

13 (4) Since the end of the cold war, aircraft car-  
14 rier deployments have increased while the aircraft  
15 carrier force structure has declined.

16 (5) Considering the increased array of complex  
17 threats across the globe, the Navy aircraft carrier is  
18 operating at maximum capacity, increasing deploy-  
19 ment lengths and decreasing maintenance periods in  
20 order to meet operational requirements.

21 (6) To meet global peacetime and wartime re-  
22 quirements, the Navy has indicated a requirement to  
23 maintain two aircraft carriers deployed overseas and  
24 have three additional aircraft carrier capable of de-  
25 ploying within 90 days. However, the Navy has indi-

1 cated that the existing aircraft carrier force struc-  
2 ture cannot support these military requirements.

3 (7) Despite the requirement to maintain an air-  
4 craft carrier strike group in both the United States  
5 Central Command and United States Pacific Com-  
6 mand, the Navy has been unable to generate suffi-  
7 cient capacity to support our combatant com-  
8 manders and has developed significant carrier gaps  
9 in these critical areas.

10 (8) Because of continuing use of a diminished  
11 aircraft carrier force structure, extensive mainte-  
12 nance availabilities result which typically exceed pro-  
13 gram costs and increase time in shipyards. These ex-  
14 pensive maintenance availabilities exacerbate exist-  
15 ing carrier gaps.

16 (9) Because of maintenance overhaul exten-  
17 sions, the Navy is truncating basic aircraft carrier  
18 training to expedite the deployment of available air-  
19 craft carriers. Limiting aircraft carrier training de-  
20 creases operational capabilities and increases sailor  
21 risk.

22 (10) Despite the objections of the Navy, the  
23 Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Tech-  
24 nology, and Logistics directed the Navy on August  
25 7, 2015, to perform shock trials on the U.S.S. Ger-

1        ald R. Ford (CVN-78). The Assistant Deputy Chief  
2        of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans and  
3        Strategy indicated that this action could delay the  
4        introduction of the U.S.S. Gerald R. Ford (CVN-  
5        78) to the fleet by up to two years, exacerbating ex-  
6        isting carrier gaps.

7            (11) The Navy has adopted a two-phase acqui-  
8        sition strategy for the U.S.S. John F. Kennedy  
9        (CVN-79), an action that will delay the introduction  
10       of this aircraft carrier by up to two years, exacer-  
11       bating existing carrier gaps.

12           (12) Developing an alternative design to the  
13       Ford-class aircraft carrier is not cost beneficial. A  
14       smaller design is projected to incur significant de-  
15       sign and engineering cost while significantly reduc-  
16       ing magazine size, carrier air wing size, sortie rate,  
17       and on-station effectiveness among other vital fac-  
18       tors when compared to the Ford-class. Furthermore,  
19       a new design will delay the introduction of future  
20       aircraft carriers, exacerbating existing carrier gaps  
21       and threatening the national security of the United  
22       States.

23           (13) The 2016 Navy Force Structure Assess-  
24       ment states “A minimum of 12 aircraft carriers are  
25       required to meet the increased warfighting response

1 requirements of the Defense Planning Guidance De-  
2 feat/Deny force sizing direction.”

3 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-  
4 gress that—

5 (1) the United States should expedite delivery  
6 of 12 aircraft carriers;

7 (2) an aircraft carrier should be authorized  
8 every three years;

9 (3) shock trials should be conducted on the  
10 U.S.S. John F. Kennedy (CVN-79), as initially pro-  
11 posed by the Navy;

12 (4) construction for the U.S.S. John F. Ken-  
13 nedy (CVN-79) should be accomplished in a single  
14 phase;

15 (5) the United States should continue the Ford-  
16 class design for CVN-81; and

17 (6) bulk procurement initiatives for CVN-80  
18 and CVN-81 should be pursued.

19 **SEC. 3. SHOCK TRIALS FOR CVN-78.**

20 Section 128(b)(1) of the National Defense Authoriza-  
21 tion Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114-92; 129  
22 Stat. 751) is amended by striking “prior to the first de-  
23 ployment of such ship”.

1 **SEC. 4. INCREASE IN NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL AIRCRAFT**  
2 **CARRIERS OF THE NAVY.**

3 (a) INCREASE.—Section 5062(b) of title 10, United  
4 States Code, is amended by striking “11 operational air-  
5 craft carriers” and inserting “12 operational aircraft car-  
6 riers”.

7 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by  
8 subsection (a) shall take effect on September 30, 2023.

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