



David K. Root

Legislative Chairman (State)
Department of Ohio Veterans of Foreign Wars

rootohiovfw@gmail.com

Mobile: 440-420-0313

Testimony before the House Veterans and Military Development Committee

House Concurrent Resolution 20 - *Honor the United States Navy; commemorate its 250th anniversary*

1 October 2025

Chair Richardson, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Lawson-Rowe, and members of the House Veterans and Military Development Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide testimony this morning in support of House Concurrent Resolution 20.

I am David Root, State Legislative Chairman for the Department of Ohio, Veterans of Foreign Wars and a past State Commander. I am also a veteran of the United States Navy. The second of four generations of Roots to serve in the Navy. My father served during the 1940s -World War II, I served the 60s -Vietnam. My son served in the 90s –a submariner so none of us know where he was or what he did, and my grandson is currently serving, and it looks like he might make it a career.

I am firmly behind Concurrent Resolution 20. It will honor the service, heroism, and devotion to duty of the many men, women, and children who have served in the United States Navy since its inception first as the Continental Navy and then as the Department of the Navy.

I would like to point out that we might not even have a Navy today if it had not been for the Adams Family. No. Not the family you may have seen on TV or in the movies. I'm referring to John Adams, our second President and his son John Quincy Adams, our sixth president. It was John –the father -who advocated for and was a key figure in forming the Continental Navy. And as president he authorized the buildup of the Navy and secured the funding for it. He was the president that signed the act that created the Department of the Navy.

John Quince Adams advocated for a larger more modern navy. Throughout his lengthy service as a statesman, he advocated for federal investment in naval expansion, and he pushed for the establishing a naval academy.

Other presidents who favored a strong United States Navy were Andrew Jackson, Benjamin Harrison, Theodore Roosevelt and his fifth cousin Franklin Roosevelt, and more recently, Ronald Reagan. While none of those men actually served in the Navy, they knew the importance of the role the United States Navy played in the world and of the men and women who made it work.

There were however, six men who did serve in our Navy before they became presidents. John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and George H. W. Bush all served in the Navy. In remarks to the cadets at the Naval Academy in 1963 John Kenedy said, "Any man who may be asked in this century what he did to make his life worthwhile, I think can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction: 'I served in the United States Navy'".

Since its beginning, 250 years ago, more than 1.75 million proud men and women have served in the US Navy. Today there are 500,000 serving on active duty and in the ready reserve.

I could not find a number for how many Ohioans have served in the Navy, but we know there are about 600,000 veterans who call Ohio home and according to the VA, about 25% of all veterans served in the Navy. I'll let you do the math.

Ohio has many proud veterans of the US Navy. As a member of the VFW and the American Legion, I have had the honor of meeting many of them. There are some in this room right now. Some have 20 or more years of service while others like me have only four. We had different jobs; we

served in different locations. We served during war and during peace. Some were officers and others were enlisted. There were black sailors and white. Men and women. We came from different states, some from the big city and others from the country.

As diverse as we are, we have one thing in common. We are all Sailors. We call each other Shipmate, and we are all proud of the time we spent in the United States Navy.

I would like to thank Representative Dovilla –a shipmate -for sponsoring this resolution along with his cosponsor Representative Santucci. It will tell the world the members of the 136th Ohio General Assembly officially “honor the distinguished service and exceptional valor of the men and women of the United States Navy and commemorate the 250th anniversary of its founding.” And I want to urge the members of this committee to give it favorable passage today and do everything you can to fast track it to completion. October 13, 2025, would be a great date to shoot for. It will be the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States Navy.

Thank you, Chair Richardson and members of the committee. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.