

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2506

November 17, 2015

Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Mabus:

I am inquiring on the possibility of naming one of the scheduled Arleigh Burke-class destroyers after one of Missouri's finest heroes and sailors, Admiral Claude V. Ricketts.

Admiral Ricketts began his naval career with the rank of E-1, and progressed to O-10 as a four-star Admiral, becoming the first to accomplish this feat. Admiral Ricketts came from a humble but hardworking farm background and overcame academic obstacles to qualify for the Naval Academy Preparatory School and later the United States Naval Academy.

Admiral Ricketts' counter-flooding efforts as a Lieutenant on the U.S.S. West Virginia in Pearl Harbor saved many lives. He pioneered Amphibious Warfare in the Pacific Fleet, 1942-43, and later served in various command and staff assignments, serving as one of Admiral Burke's primary lieutenants. The building that houses athletic offices and the football locker room at the United States Naval Academy bears the name "Ricketts Hall" in order to honor him. Admiral Ricketts passed away while in office as Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

The prior U.S.S. Claude V. Ricketts (DDG-5) was one of the most decorated ships in the Cold War navy. The Ricketts was the symbol of unity within the NATO alliance, the symbol of heroism at sea in high intensity operations including ship and crew rescue of U.S.S. Belknap in November 1975. It was typical of its sister ships in deploying many times, providing quick responses to crisis situations and protecting the interests of the United States.

It is my understanding that there are eight new Arleigh Burke-class destroyers currently scheduled for construction and as-of-yet unnamed. I request that you consider naming one of these destroyers after Admiral Claude V. Ricketts. I also request that you keep my office informed of any decision made on this issue.

Sincerely,



Sam Graves
Member of Congress