



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20350
26 June 1987

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The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

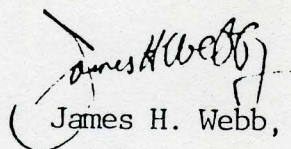
Dear Senator Byrd:

Thank you for your recent letter requesting that the name WEST VIRGINIA be assigned to a new Trident submarine.

Your recommendation reflects justifiable pride in the fine service of the battleship USS WEST VIRGINIA (BB 48), which was commissioned in 1923 and earned five battle stars during World War II. Armored Cruiser No. 5 also served under the name WEST VIRGINIA from 1905 to 1916, when she was renamed USS HUNTINGTON so that your state's name could be given to the battleship. Any future WEST VIRGINIA would thus inherit a fine tradition of service.

At this time 19 U.S. Navy ships--four battleships, six guided missile cruisers, and nine new fleet ballistic missile submarines--honor states of the Union. Our future shipbuilding plans include five more fleet ballistic missile submarines. I will give your suggestion every consideration when we name these new ships.

Sincerely,


James H. Webb, Jr.