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ENERGY AND NATURAL
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COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

February 26, 2015

The Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Mabus,

I write to strongly urge you to consider naming a U.S. Navy ship for Medal of Honor recipient and West Virginia icon, Chief Warrant Officer 4 retired (CWO4) Hershel "Woody" Williams. Doing so would serve as a fitting and lasting tribute to the courageous actions of West Virginia's resident hero, Woody Williams. Woody has dedicated his life to public service, and he is representative of the service and sacrifice that my great state has given to the nation. Naming a ship for Woody will not only honor his legacy, but also the legacy of scores of West Virginia Veterans and families who have given so much to keep our nation strong.

I believe that this honor is in keeping with Navy tradition and policies, since there have been 15 vessels named for living heroes since the 1970s. I believe that honoring the service and sacrifice of Woody Williams is long overdue, especially considering that he is the last living Medal of Honor recipient from the Battle of Iwo Jima. After retiring from the Marine Corps, Woody continued in public service at the Veterans Affairs Administration for 35 years. Even today, at the age of 91, Woody travels around the country to advocate for Veterans and their families. As a matter of fact, Woody is scheduled to travel with you to Iwo Jima in March of this year.

I am deeply honored to recommend naming a U.S. Navy ship for CWO4 Williams. Thank you for your full, fair, and timely consideration of my request. I look forward to your response within the next two weeks.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator