

Dear Representative _____,

As your California constituent and a diver, I am concerned for both the **ocean environment and California's economy**. **It has come to my attention** that in the near future, the Flight II group of the *Ticonderoga* class of missile cruisers could be decommissioned. This group of ships would be the first to be decommissioned that were built after the use of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) was discontinued in naval ships. Recently, the Maritime Administration (MARAD) discontinued donating vessels for use as artificial reefs, citing the presence of PCBs in them.

I am writing to request that you take whatever action you can to ensure that:

- 1) The Navy and MARAD treat reefing on an equal priority basis as a method of disposal for decommissioned vessels, as mandated in law, and
- 2) Navy and MARAD be allowed to communicate with responsible non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in deploying artificial reefs, particularly in those states where artificial reefing activities are not being carried out by the State government, but where the NGOs doing so **are acting in cooperation and coordination with their state's** fish and wildlife department.

Please note that I am not requesting that the ships of the Flight II group of the *Ticonderoga* class be decommissioned any earlier than they would normally be. In fact, it is my understanding that some of them have undergone upgrades to extend their useful service life. This request is that when the decision is made to dispose of these ships, they be allowed the chance to serve their nation again, for as much as 100 years or more, as environmental and economic benefits and monuments to the crews that served aboard them.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the undersigned or visit www.californiashipstoreefs.org for further information.

Sincerely,