



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of the Navy  
Office of the Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652  
Washington, D.C. 20350

Dear Secretary Del Toro:

I write to strongly support hosting the main 2025 celebrations of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the Navy and Marine Corps in Philadelphia. There is no more fitting place to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the Navy and Marine Corps than at their birthplace: Philadelphia and the Delaware River.

As we prepare to honor the Semiquincentennial of the Independence of the United States in 2026, it is important to commemorate the events that enabled and protected that independence: the creation of the American military services. On October 13, 1775, at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, the Second Continental Congress founded the Navy, whose first ship was soon commissioned on the banks of the Delaware. On November 10, 1775, the Second Continental Congress passed a resolution to raise the first battalions of Marines, who were recruited at Tun Tavern in Philadelphia. From there, the Marines soon sailed down the Delaware on their first amphibious operation.

Pennsylvania and New Jersey organizations and citizens have joined together as Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps to propose *Launching the Semiquincentennial*. Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps is planning spectacular celebrations for the Navy and Marine Corps' 250<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. For each, there will be ceremonies, parades, flyovers, reenactments, and exhibits at Independence Hall, Tun Tavern, historic Philadelphia sites, and both sides of the Delaware River.

In October 2025, Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps will celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Navy's founding by featuring historical, replica, and active-duty ships on the Delaware River representing every major war that the Navy has fought, from the American Revolution to the Cold War and the subsequent conflicts in the Middle East. The Delaware River is the best location for this unprecedented exhibition of Naval history. Philadelphia has preserved the USS *Olympia*, the sole surviving ship from the Spanish-American War, which also served in World War I. Camden, Philadelphia's New Jersey neighbor, has preserved the USS *New Jersey*, the only battleship to fight in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Cold War, and the Middle East, and the most decorated Navy ship afloat.

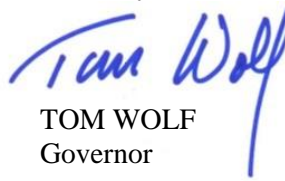
In November 2025, Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps will celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Marine Corps by assembling historic, replica, and active-duty ships with a special connection to the Marine Corps for touring on the Delaware River. Most importantly, the Marines' 250<sup>th</sup> will be celebrated by rebuilding Tun Tavern, the hallowed birthplace of the Corps, near its original location on the Delaware River. Not only were the first Marines recruited at Tun Tavern, history was also made there by Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, John Adams, and others. The historic tavern, rebuilt and operating as a

charity by the Tun Tavern Legacy Foundation, will provide a mecca for Marines and others for decades to come.

I ask that you support this *Launching the Semiquincentennial* proposal by designating Philadelphia and the Delaware River as the sites of the main celebrations of the 250<sup>th</sup> birthdays of the Navy and Marines. The presentation of Navy and Marine Corps ships on the Delaware and the rebuilding of Tun Tavern are highlights unequalled anywhere. I request that you authorize those services to participate and cooperate by bringing in active-duty ships, aircraft, and personnel to Philadelphia to represent the Navy and Marine Corps of yesterday, today, and the future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Wolf". The signature is stylized, with a large, sweeping "T" and a cursive "Wolf".

TOM WOLF  
Governor