



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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JAMES F. KENNEY
MAYOR

June 16, 2021

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

Dear Secretary Del Toro,

As Mayor of Philadelphia, I write to strongly support Launching the Semiquincentennial by having the main 2025 celebrations of the 250th anniversaries of the Navy and Marine Corps in Philadelphia.

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

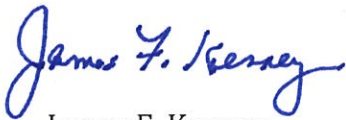
There is no more fitting place to celebrate the 250th birthdays of the Navy and Marine Corps than at their birthplace: Philadelphia and the Delaware River. A group of Pennsylvania and New Jersey organizations and citizens have joined together as "Homecoming 250 Navy-Marine Corps." They propose "Launching the Semiquincentennial" with two exciting historic celebrations.

The 250th anniversary of the Navy will be commemorated in October 2025 by ceremonies and parades at Independence Hall in Philadelphia and on both banks of the Delaware. It will also be celebrated by assembling on the Delaware River historical, replica, and active-duty ships representing every major war which the Navy has fought: the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and conflicts in the Middle East. This unprecedented gathering of Navy history is only possible on the Delaware, as Philadelphia has preserved the USS *Olympia*, the only surviving ship from the Spanish-American War (which also served in World War I), and adjacent Camden, New Jersey, has preserved the USS *New Jersey*, the only battleship to fight in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Cold War, and the Middle East.

The 250th anniversary of the Marine Corps will be celebrated in November 2025 by ceremonies and parades on both banks of the Delaware, including at Independence Hall. It will also be celebrated by assembling on the Delaware historic, replica, and active-duty ships with a special connection to the Marine Corps, including the *Olympia* and the *New Jersey*. Most importantly, the Marines' 250th will be celebrated by rebuilding Tun Tavern, hallowed birthplace of the Corps, near its original location on the Delaware. A rebuilt, operating Tun Tavern will be a mecca for Marines and others for decades to come.

The City of Philadelphia strongly supports the proposal and will work to welcome the Navy and the Marines. I ask that you support this Launching the Semiquincentennial proposal by designating Philadelphia as the site of the main celebrations of the 250th birthdays of the Navy and Marines. I request you authorize those services to participate and cooperate by bringing in active-duty ships, aircraft, and personnel to Philadelphia and the Delaware to represent the Navy and Marine Corps of recent years, today, and the future. Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you and working with your team on this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James F. Kenney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" and last name "Kenney" clearly legible.

James F. Kenney
Mayor