

DUNCAN HUNTER  
52D DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0552**

223 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0552  
(202) 225-6672  
FAX: (202) 225-0235

1870 CORDELL COURT, #206  
EL CAJON, CA 92020  
(619) 448-5201  
FAX: (619) 449-2251

July 27, 2011

Mr. Gene L. Dodaro  
Comptroller General of the United States  
U.S. Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street NW, Room 7100  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

Recent diver inspections and ultrasonic tests conducted on LCS-2, the USS Independence, revealed aggressive galvanic corrosion in all four water jet tunnels and water jet cone assemblies. This follows a March 18, 2011, report that LCS-1, the USS Freedom, had developed a crack in its hull during sea trials. Throughout the history of this program, the Navy has been over cost and has failed to meet its own deadlines.

In fact, an August 2010 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report highlighted the technical, design, and construction challenges facing the Navy in completing the first four ships within the estimated cost and schedule outline. The report states:

However, technical issues with the first two seaframes have yet to be fully resolved. Addressing these technical issues has required the Navy to implement design changes at the same time LCS-3 and LCS-4 are being built. Incorporating changes during this phase will likely require additional labor hours beyond current forecasts. Together, these challenges may hinder the ability of shipbuilders to apply lessons learned to follow-on ships and could undermine anticipated benefits from recent capital investments in the LCS shipyards.

Given the concerns mentioned in previous GAO reports and the poor performance of the LCS program with cost overruns and delays, I (We) respectfully request that GAO review and as necessary update the August 2010 report on the LCS program. Specifically, the following issues should be examined:

- What is being done by the Navy to overcome the technical design flaws in the first two ships so that changes can be properly made to follow-on ships?
- What is being done by the Navy to ensure that follow-on ships will be delivered within cost and time estimates?

- What actions has the Navy taken to make certain that both ship designed mission packages will meet the capabilities they were intended to meet?
- The performance and operational maintenance data of the propulsion systems onboard LCS-1 and LCS-2.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Duncan Hunter  
Member of Congress



Rob Wittman  
Member of Congress