



Nov. 8, 2024

HII's Weekly News Digest is compiled every Friday by the Corporate Communications team to summarize and highlight news stories of significance to the company.

HII Names Kari Wilkson As NNS President; Brian Blanchette To Head Ingalls: WLOX reported on Wednesday that Kari Wilkinson has been named the next president of HII's Newport News Shipbuilding division. She will take the helm of HII's largest division on Jan. 1. She succeeds Jennifer Boykin who will remain with the company in an advisory role through the end of March 2025 before retiring after 37 years of dedicated service. Replacing Wilkinson as the head of HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division is Brian Blanchette, who has served as vice president of quality and engineering at Ingalls since May 2021. WAVY reported on Wednesday that Wilkinson becomes the 21st president of NNS since it was founded in 1886. "You will not find a more loyal advocate than Jennifer for her shipbuilders and the Hampton Roads community," HII CEO Chris Kastner said. "Kari's leadership has steered Ingalls Shipbuilding into its next phase of growth, having secured serial production contracts for both the destroyer and amphibious ship programs. She is a tremendous leader and now brings her great energy and expertise to Newport News."

Key Defense, Appropriations Seats Change Hands, Some Still Up For Grabs: Breaking Defense reported on Thursday that this week's election results will reshuffle congressional defense and appropriations committees. While it may be a few days before the fate of the House majority is decided, what's certain is that Republicans will control the Senate during the 119th Congress. Defense Daily reported on Wednesday that Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., is in position to take over as the likely next leader of the Senate Armed Services Committee and potentially pursue a previously detailed agenda to boost defense spending to 5% of the gross domestic product. Meanwhile, one of the Senate seats that flipped to Republican control is held by Appropriations defense subcommittee chairman Jon Tester who was defeated by Republican candidate Tim Sheehy, a former Navy SEAL. House Appropriations defense subcommittee Chairman Ken Calvert remains in a close battle with Democratic challenger, Will Rollins, for California's 41st district. Analysts view this race as a key battleground that could help determine which party will control the House moving forward. The Hill reported on Thursday that Sens. John Thune and John Cornyn are facing a one-week sprint to win the chamber's top spot after the GOP clinched the majority. They are vying for support to replace outgoing Senate GOP Leader Mitch McConnell, who did not seek re-election. Committee assignments will be finalized when the 119th Congress begins on Jan. 3.

Trump Presidency To Shift Defense Spending: Breaking Defense reported on Wednesday that Donald Trump's election win could signal increased support for shipbuilding and defense programs, although there is still significant unpredictability around the defense budget. The administration's isolationist focus could reshape spending priorities, especially if it shifts funds away from foreign aid. Politico reported on Wednesday that it remains unclear whether Trump would revive his plan to increase the Navy to more than 500 ships, which would require billions of additional dollars. His administration will likely face tough choices between investing in new ships versus maintaining the readiness of the existing fleet. Todd Harrison, a defense budget expert with the American Enterprise Institute, said which party controls the House will play a significant role in the future defense budget, although the "first 100 days of the new Trump Administration could represent a major reset in foreign policy and defense spending," with a Trump Pentagon likely positive for space, shipbuilding, missile defense and defense startups.

Social Media Highlight Of The Week

Posted Thursday on HII's LinkedIn page:

"HII is excited to be a Prime Sponsor of the Maritime/Air Systems & Technologies (MAST) Asia-Pacific conference in City of Adelaide, Australia, from November 19-21!

Visit us at Booth B07-B12 to discover how HII Australia is supporting the hashtag#AUKUS partnership through advanced technologies, including nuclear-powered submarine construction, unmanned systems, and workforce and supply chain development.

With headquarters in Canberra, HII Australia provides a range of capabilities, from maintenance and engineering to software development and training solutions.

Don't miss our executive-led panels for insights into mission-critical solutions and the future of defense innovation.

Join us to connect with industry leaders and learn how HII is advancing security solutions across the Asia-Pacific.

🌐 hashtag#HIIatMAST hashtag#MASTAsiaPacific"



Boeing Machinists Vote To End Strike: CNBC reported on Tuesday that Boeing machinists approved a new labor deal Monday, ending a costly seven-week strike that halted most of the company's aircraft production. Machinists voted 59% in favor of the new contract, which includes 38% wage increases over four years and other improvements. Politico reported on Tuesday that the strike will likely have residual effects for some time. Moody's Ratings last week warned that it believes the "hangover" from the machinists walkout at Boeing will weigh on monthly 737 MAX production next year. Meanwhile, Reuters reported on Tuesday that CEO Kelly Ortberg, just three months into the job, will need to start the long process of restoring plane production, restructuring Boeing's floundering defense and space business, and shoring up a weakened supply chain in order to turn the company around.

HII's Weekly News Digest is produced by HII's Corporate Communications team and posted to Homeport every Friday.

Please note: Social media is blocked on HII computers for most employees. Employees are encouraged to visit HII's Facebook page and other social media sites on personal time and from non-work devices.

Send feedback to: HII_Communications@hii-co.com.