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## **General Dynamics Electric Boat Marks Keel Laying of Submarine District of Columbia (SSBN 826)**

**Quonset Point, R.I.** (June 4, 2022) – General Dynamics Electric Boat laid the keel of submarine District of Columbia (SSBN 826) at a ceremony at its facility in Quonset Point, Rhode Island. The keel laying is a ceremonial event in which the initials of the ship’s sponsor are welded onto a plate to be affixed to the submarine, it marks a milestone in the construction of a ship.

District of Columbia is the first ship in the new class of ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) being built for the U.S. Navy by Electric Boat. It will replace the 14 Ohio-class (SSBN 726) submarines due to begin to retire from service in 2027. Each class is named for the first ship in the series.

“With the Columbia-class program, the Navy has entrusted Electric Boat to deliver the next sixty years of nuclear deterrence for our nation, continuing the company’s legacy of delivering the finest, most technically advanced submarines in the world,” said Kevin Graney, president of General Dynamics Electric Boat. “These submarines are critical for our national defense, and will embody the commitment to excellence our shipbuilders bring to their work each and every day.”

In attendance was the sponsor of the ship Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), the delegate to the House of Representatives from the ship’s namesake, the District of Columbia. Upon the successful weld of her initials onto a plate by Electric Boat welder Maria Betance-Pizarro, the congresswoman declared the keel “true and fairly laid.”

Since submarines have round hulls and do not have a keel, the ceremonial plate will be mounted in a place of honor on the ship permanently.

Design of District of Columbia began in 2007 when the Navy approached Electric Boat to assist in the conceptual design of a replacement for the aging Ohio class, which entered service in the early 1980s. The Columbia class of 12 ships will carry 16 missiles each, which in total will represent approximately 70 percent of the country’s nuclear arsenal. Submarines are the stealthiest and most survivable of the nation’s nuclear triad of land, air and sea-based nuclear weapons.

At a length of 560 feet and displacing 20,810 tons, District of Columbia will be the largest submarine ever built by the U.S. Its reactor will not require refueling during the lifetime of planned service making the ship more cost-effective to operate and maximizing its time on deployment. In addition to its complement of missiles, the submarine will be armed with Mk 48 torpedoes and will feature superior acoustic performance and state-of-the-art sensors to make it the most capable and quiet submarine ever built.

District of Columbia is designed for modular construction and construction is under way at Quonset Point with the support of more than 3,000 suppliers from around the country, including major bow and stern components manufactured by principal sub-contractor Newport News Shipbuilding. Outfitted hull modules will be barged to the Electric Boat shipyard in Groton, Conn., where they will be assembled into a complete hull, fully equipped and tested prior to delivery to the Navy. Electric Boat is constructing a 200,000-square foot assembly building in Groton for the project, which will be operational in time for the first module's arrival in 2023. The building is part of a \$1.8 billion investment General Dynamics is making to grow its submarine design and manufacturing infrastructure. Construction of the lead ship is presently more than 20 percent complete.

District of Columbia is the latest in a continuing relationship between Electric Boat and the country's ballistic missile fleet. The first ballistic missile submarine, USS George Washington (SSBN 598) was designed and built by Electric Boat and delivered in 1959. This was followed by the design and construction of the lead ships in the Ethan Allen (SSBN 608), Lafayette (SSBN 616), and Benjamin Franklin (SSBN 640) classes. All 18 boats of the Ohio class were designed by Electric Boat and built at its facilities in Quonset Point and Groton. District of Columbia is scheduled for delivery in 2027 and expected to begin its first deployment in 2030. The Columbia class of submarines is expected to have a service life into the 2080s.

General Dynamics (NYSE: GD) is a global aerospace and defense company that offers a broad portfolio of products and services in business aviation; ship construction and repair; land combat vehicles, weapons systems and munitions; and technology products and services. General Dynamics employs more than 100,000 people worldwide and generated \$38.5 billion in revenue in 2021. More information is available at [www.gd.com](http://www.gd.com).

For more information on Electric Boat, please visit [www.gdeb.com](http://www.gdeb.com).

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