

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 17, 2026

The Honorable Platte Moring
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense
4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22350-1500

Dear Mr. Moring,

We write to request that the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General (OIG) undertake an independent review of the processes, rationale, and decisions surrounding the extended deployment of the San Diego-homeported *USS Abraham Lincoln* and Carrier Strike Group 3 (CSG-3) and the lessons being applied as the *USS George Washington* moves to relieve the *USS Abraham Lincoln*. As members of Congress representing the brave Sailors and Marines deployed on the *USS Abraham Lincoln* and in CSG-3, we are seriously concerned about the reported conditions on CSG-3 vessels, the wellbeing of its servicemembers, and Secretary of Defense Hegseth's inadequate explanations regarding the reported conditions.

The carrier and the strike group departed San Diego on November 21, 2025, and continue to be deployed well beyond their originally anticipated return, including more than 200 consecutive days at sea. We have the solemn honor of representing servicemembers in the San Diego region, including Naval Air Station North Island, Naval Base San Diego, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. The Sailors and Marines on board the strike group are our constituents, and we have listened to heartbreaking stories about conditions from their families. The duration and combat conditions of this extraordinary deployment warrant a review of how the Navy's risk assessment and contingency planning processes were undertaken and what rationale they relied upon as the mission was extended.

Credible reports of food shortages, unsanitary conditions, and a lack of other essential supplies demonstrate a jarring vulnerability in the necessary sustainment system supporting the strike group. An independent review would identify where replenishment capacity and logistics routing failed to meet the demands placed on our servicemembers. There are also credible reports about deteriorating mental health among servicemembers and a lack of responsiveness to such risks by DoD leadership. An independent review would identify the mental health resources available to servicemembers deployed on the carrier and the strike group. The independent review should also assess the Department's policies, practices, and responses to reported mental health concerns from servicemembers, with recommendations for improvement. That assessment should extend beyond *USS Abraham Lincoln* itself to the other vessels in CSG-3, whose Sailors and Marines have operated under the same intense tempo and whose fatigue, nutrition, and health, including mental health, are part of the overall picture. Despite Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth's assertion that reports of conditions on board are "completely misrepresented,"¹ military family members continue to sound the alarm about their loved ones' wellbeing. Acting Secretary of the Navy Hung Cao and other Navy leadership heard as much directly from families on August 6 during a town hall meeting in Coronado, San Diego.

¹ Stewart, Phil. "Hegseth says reports about poor conditions aboard carrier are misrepresented," *Reuters*, 13 August 2026.
<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/hegseth-says-reports-about-poor-conditions-aboard-carrier-are-misrepresented-2026-08-13/>

OIG's review should also assess whether Carrier Strike Group 3 was properly prepared before deployment, and as the mission shifted to sustained combat operations in the Middle East, for the duration and intensity that was ultimately demanded of the servicemembers.

The harmful consequences of the extension will continue after the *USS Abraham Lincoln* and the broader strike group come home. The unusually long deployment period and intense combat operations will undoubtedly increase maintenance requirements, which will compromise readiness at a time when we need to be buttressing our presence in the Pacific. These impacts and the lessons learned from this deployment should be properly understood and incorporated into planning for the *USS George Washington* before the same mistakes are repeated, especially now that President Donald Trump has said that the *USS Lincoln*'s deployment was "not nearly long enough."²

We, therefore, request that the OIG examine the following questions and provide recommendations for improvement:

1. Did the U.S. Navy's sustainment operations provide effective support to Carrier Strike Group 3? What process failures led to the reported shortages?
2. Were Sailors and Marines in CSG-3 adequately trained, equipped, and supported for a deployment of this length under intense combat conditions?
 - a. If not, for what length of deployment were the sailors and Marines in CSG-3 adequately trained, equipped, and supported for?
 - b. Were Sailors and Marines in CSG-3 provided adequate mental health support for a deployment of this length and intense combat conditions? If not, for what length of deployment did the sailors and Marines in CSG-3 receive adequate mental health support for?
3. How will the extended deployment affect the strike group's future readiness? Has the Navy already taken any steps to learn from this deployment as the *USS George Washington* prepares to relieve the *USS Abraham Lincoln*? If so, please explain what steps.

The U.S. Navy will increasingly take a central role as our nation shifts to tackling the full-spectrum challenge presented by adversaries. It is imperative that the Department of Defense take every action to protect its most important asset, U.S. servicemembers. By this measure, it has failed Sailors and Marines deployed with the *USS Abraham Lincoln* and Carrier Strike Group 3 and their families. The San Diego military community is a linchpin of our nation's Pacific strategy, and it will take significant effort to restore morale and capacity after the strike group comes back home. An independent review and recommendations for improvement would identify what happened and provide us with oversight tools to ensure the wellbeing of our constituents and safeguard our Navy.

Sincerely,

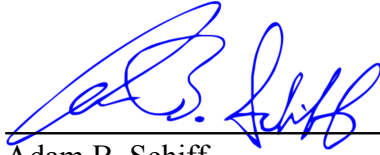
² Liptak, Kevin. "Trump says USS Lincoln's deployment was 'not nearly long enough'" *CNN*, 14 August 2026.
<https://www.cnn.com/2026/08/14/politics/trump-uss-abraham-lincoln-deployment>



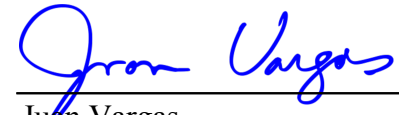
Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



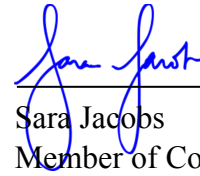
Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress