

United States Senate

April 27, 2023

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro
Secretary
Department of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Del Toro,

I write regarding your comments last week to the Senate Armed Services Committee in favor of expanding legal immigration. This adds to remarks you made in a recent presentation at the National Defense Industrial Association Expeditionary Warfare conference, in which you claimed that the United States lacks sufficient blue-collar workers and should admit more migrant laborers. Your assessment of the U.S. labor force and immigration system is incorrect.

Over 5.8 million Americans are unemployed, nearly seven million prime working-age men are outside of the labor force, and nearly 27 million Americans are relying on part-time work. There are clearly enough Americans to work in our nation's shipyards—which employ barely 100,000 workers.

The current level of legal immigration is also more than sufficient. The United States admits over a million permanent residents each year—enough to replace every active-duty service member in the Navy almost three times over. Our country is also home to almost one-fifth of the world's migrants and more than three times as many migrants as any other nation.

Rather than seek to import more foreign workers, the Navy ought to redouble efforts to recruit Americans to address the labor shortages in our shipyards. I look forward to working with you to increase awareness of employment opportunities in our shipyards and improve incentives for Americans to take these essential jobs.

Sincerely,



Tom Cotton
United States Senator