

## **Naval Submarine Support Center, New London**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **State of Connecticut declares Dec. 22 USS Connecticut Day**

**By Naval Submarine Support Center, New London, Public Affairs**

The state of Connecticut declared Dec. 22 USS Connecticut (SSN-22) Day in an executive proclamation released to the public.

The proclamation, signed by Governor Ned Lamont, coincides with the anniversary of the Seawolf-class fast-attack submarine's 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of commissioning, Dec. 11.

The proclamation lists the submarine's myriad accomplishments and states, "Whereas, the patriotic citizens of the State of Connecticut are incredibly proud of 'Our Ship' and hope and pray for the safety of the officers and crews as they patrol the waters of the world protecting freedom and democracy, while fostering the spirit of friendship of the people of the state of Connecticut..."

Like the state, USS Connecticut has a highly decorated history, with three Meritorious Unit Commendations, three Battle "E" awards, one Secretary of the Navy Letter of Commendation, and numerous other accolades.

Additionally, the boat has a wealth of operational experience, making deployments across the globe to the North Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean, and Arctic Circle.

The boat's current commanding officer, Cmdr. Cameron Aljilani, recalls the submarine's Arctic Circle excursions as the highlight of his tour.

"My proudest moment as CO was surfacing at the North Pole," said Aljilani. "The pay-off was seeing my crew visit one of the most beautiful and desolate places on the planet as the sun slowly circled us just below the horizon."

While the boat is homeported in Silverdale, Washington, and not the colloquially known "Submarine Capital of the World" of Groton, Connecticut, the submarine retains close ties with the state and its Sailors feel an immense pride in representing the Constitution State.

"Connecticut has the most submarines of any base in the world," said the boat's executive officer, Lt. Cmdr. Thomas Williams. "It's also a major training center where all submariners will pass through at one point. I've spent time in Connecticut several times and the pride everyone in the state has for its submarine history is incredible. I am very lucky to serve on board the ship that's named after the state that is the capital of the submarine fleet."

Petty Officer 2nd Class Zachary M. Barnett, an Information System Technician and native of Colchester, Connecticut, is proud to represent his home state and serve aboard the state's namesake boat.

"There have been several other boats in the history of our Navy named after Connecticut, including the flagship of the Great White Fleet," Barnett said. "This USS Connecticut (SSN 22) is the best USS Connecticut the Navy has ever had."

USS Connecticut is one of two active-duty submarines representing the Constitution State. The other, USS Hartford (SSN 768), is currently stationed in Groton and celebrated its 26<sup>th</sup> commissioning anniversary on Dec. 10.

Connecticut, commissioned Dec. 11, 1998, is the second of the Navy's three Seawolf-class submarines, all of which are homeported in the Pacific Northwest. Originally intended as a class of 29 submarines, the end of the Cold War and budget constraints led to a restructuring of the class to three submarines. The Seawolf-class is significantly quieter than any Los Angeles-class submarine, faster, has more torpedo tubes, and can carry more weapons -- up to 50 torpedoes or missiles, or 100 mines.

