

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 7, 2026

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

Dear Inspector General Moring:

I write to request an independent review of the Department of the Navy's management of the recent deployment of the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN-72), and of the decisions and systems behind the reported shortages of food and basic supplies, sustained crew fatigue, and limited access to mental-health resources aboard the ship.¹ What was scheduled as a seven-month rotation was extended twice, lasted more than nine months, and included more than 200 consecutive days at sea without a port call.²

These conditions were reported over a sustained period and across multiple categories of basic support, which suggests a failure of planning and oversight rather than an isolated lapse.³ I request that the review address the following:

- 1. Deployment planning and extension decisions.** The processes and authorities used to determine whether and for how long the Lincoln's deployment should be extended, including whether applicable Navy policies, deployment-duration limitations, waiver authorities⁴, readiness assessments, and risk-management procedures were followed.
- 2. Sustainment and resupply.** The adequacy of the Navy's planning and execution for resupplying the Lincoln during the extended deployment, including food, potable water, hygiene products, spare parts, and other essential supplies; the causes of any shortages⁵; and the adequacy of contingency plans when normal logistics arrangements were disrupted.

1 Alex Wilson, *USS Abraham Lincoln Arrives in Thailand for First Full Port Visit After 286 Days at Sea*, Stars & Stripes (Sept. 2, 2026) (reporting 208 consecutive days at sea and the first regular port call in nearly nine months).

2 Priya Sridhar, *Moldy Showers and No Soap: Military Families Are Outraged by Conditions on USS Lincoln*, MS NOW (Aug. 5, 2026) (reporting family accounts of food shortages, moldy showers, broken toilets, laundry problems, shortages of toiletries, exhaustion, and morale concerns).

3 *Id.*

4 U.S. Gov't Accountability Off., *Military Readiness: Navy Is Making Progress Implementing Its Fleet Response Plan, but Has Not Fully Developed Goals, Measures, and Resource Needs*, GAO-08-264, at 8–9 (2008) (describing Navy deployment-length limits and CNO waiver authority).

5 See Jeff Schogol, *How a Navy Aircraft Carrier Ended Up Short on Food in a War Zone*, Task & Purpose (Aug. 21, 2026) (describing disruptions to logistics hubs and longer resupply routes during the Iran conflict).

3. **Leadership response to warnings and reported deficiencies.** What information regarding deteriorating conditions, supply shortages, fatigue, morale, or crew welfare was reported to ship, strike-group, fleet, and Department of the Navy leadership⁶; when that information was received; what actions each level of command took in response; and whether identified risks were appropriately elevated or mitigated at each level.
4. **Mental-health access and medical support.** The staffing, availability, and utilization of mental- and behavioral-health resources aboard the Lincoln; how the Navy monitored fatigue, sleep, and workload, and whether fatigue-management requirements were met; and how leadership responded to indications of worsening mental-health conditions or self-harm risk, including any instances in which a sailor sought care and did not receive it.⁷
5. **Policy adequacy and corrective action.** Whether existing Navy policies governing extended deployments, resupply, port-call frequency, crew rest, and mental-health staffing are sufficient for deployments substantially longer than the traditional cycle.⁸ Where policy was followed but nonetheless produced these outcomes, I ask that your office identify the gap and recommend the specific change required to close it.

I further request that the review examine relevant records and communications at the appropriate levels of command, including deployment-extension decisions, logistics and resupply planning, readiness assessments, maintenance records, crew-rest and fatigue data, medical and behavioral-health staffing and utilization data, command climate and quality-of-life reporting, and communications concerning reported deficiencies.

The Lincoln's crew met extraordinary operational demands and performed a critical mission.⁹ That makes it all the more important to determine whether the Navy's systems were adequate to sustain sailors and maintain readiness under these conditions.

I ask that your office provide written findings, including any determination of policy noncompliance, systemic deficiency, or recommended accountability measures, no later than November 20, 2026.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

6 See *Multiple USS Abraham Lincoln Sailors Have Tried to Go Overboard Amid Extended Deployment, Families Say*, Navy Times (Aug. 11, 2026) (reporting that recordings of a Navy family meeting reviewed by MS NOW reflected concerns about sailors' mental health, exhaustion, and safety).

7 *Id.*

8 U.S. Gov't Accountability Off., *Navy Readiness: Additional Efforts Are Needed to Manage Fatigue, Reduce Crewing Shortfalls, and Implement Training*, GAO-21-366 (2021), <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-366>; *Navy Readiness: Challenges to Addressing Sailor Fatigue in the Surface Fleet Continue*, GAO-24-106819 (2023), <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106819>.

9 See Statement from Acting Secretary of the Navy Hung Cao (Aug. 14, 2026), U.S. Navy, <https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/Statements/display-statement/Article/4574706/> (reporting 266 days deployed, 200 days in a combat zone, and more than 10,000 sorties).



Ruben Gallego
United States Senator

cc: Vice Admiral M. Wayne Baze, USN
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The Honorable Hung Cao
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