

Kaine & Ricketts Introduce Bipartisan AUKUS Improvement Act



From the office of Sen. Tim Kaine, June 20, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA), a member of the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees, and Senator Pete Ricketts (R-NE), a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, introduced the *AUKUS Improvement Act*,

bipartisan legislation to strengthen the Australia-United Kingdom-United States (AUKUS) agreement by streamlining defense industrial base collaboration and co-production of Virginia-class submarines. This legislation builds upon provisions that Kaine pushed to get signed into law as part of the [Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act](#).

“The AUKUS partnership is critical to countering the threat from China and ensuring the Indo-Pacific remains free and open,” said Kaine. “I’m proud to introduce this bipartisan legislation to strengthen AUKUS and boost defense collaboration among our countries.”

Specifically, the *AUKUS Improvement Act* would:

Exempt U.S. State Department-vetted entities that have been approved as AUKUS Authorized Users from the requirement to obtain Third Party transfer approvals under Foreign Military Sales.

Exempt Australia and the United Kingdom from the need for Congressional Notification for overseas manufacturing.

Kaine has been a strong champion of AUKUS in Congress and has helped get signed into law provisions to [implement](#) and [strengthen the partnership](#). He has played a key role in securing more resources for the [submarine industrial base](#), including additional funding for the [Virginia-class submarine program](#) that is currently facing significant delays because of workforce challenges and supply chain disruptions. The on-time completion of Virginia-class submarines, which are built in Virginia and Connecticut, is critical to fulfilling the [AUKUS agreement](#), through which the U.S. will sell at least two Virginia-class submarines to Australia to boost security and freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific, and counter Chinese military aggression in the region.

In addition to Kaine and Ricketts, the legislation is

cosponsored by U.S. Senators John Cornyn (R-TX), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), Chris Coons (D-DE), Deb Fischer (R-NE), and Rick Scott (R-FL).

Full text of the legislation is available [here](#).