

# Navy Lays Keel of USS Savannah at Austal USA

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy held a keel-laying and authentication ceremony on Sept. 20 for the future littoral combat ship USS Savannah at Austal USA's Mobile, Alabama, shipyard, according to a release from Program Executive Office for Unmanned and Small Combatants.

The ship's sponsor, Dianne Isakson, wife of Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), authenticated the keel for the 14th Independence-variant LCS during the ceremony.

"We are honored to lay the keel of what will one day be a magnificent combat ship that will defend our great country as our Sailors operate her around the globe," said Capt. Mike Taylor, LCS program manager.

While the keel laying traditionally represents the formal start of a ship's construction, fabrication begins months in advance. However, keel laying continues to symbolically recognize the joining of the ship's components and the ceremonial beginning of a vessel.

Four other Independence variant LCSs are undergoing construction at Austal USA with five additional ships in pre-production planning.