

# Navy/Marine Corps Wish List: Subs, Hypersonics, Training and Education



Adm. Michael Gilday, CNO, shown here in a 2017 photo, says he would buy more submarines and hypersonic weapons if he had more money to spend. The head of the Marine Corps said he would use such a hypothetical surplus on personnel, training and education. U.S. Navy / Petty Officer 2nd Class Robert A. Hartland

ARLINGTON, Va. – More submarines and hypersonic weapons for the Navy, and more personnel and training for the Marine Corps, top the wish list, say the U.S. sea services' commanders, if Congress added an imaginary \$5 billion to their budgets.

The last question posed to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday and Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger at a Dec. 3 live-streamed panel discussion on transforming the fleet's architecture was what would they buy if, hypothetically, Congress gave them each an extra \$5 billion.

Gilday told participants at the U.S. Naval Institute's Defense Forum Washington webcast that some of the money would go to shipbuilding, "most notably submarines." In terms "of things I need to close down on now, I'd go faster with respect to the fielding of hypersonics." The CNO added that he would go "way faster" on laser technology. "I need to be able to knock down missiles."

Gilday said he would also put money in Project Overmatch, the plan to create a massive data network linking weapons and sensors across all domains. "We have to get that right, and that remains a priority for me," Gilday said. If he had any money left over, he would put it in live, virtual constructive

training and “ready learning” to use technology to train Sailors faster.

“Hypersonics, the network and lasers would be the top three on my list,” he said.

Berger said he would put all his money in manpower, personnel, training and education, noting the maxim “Don’t buy anything you can’t maintain.” Instead of a thing, he would invest in people and their training. “To elevate and modernize a force, you have to pour the resources into those areas,” Berger said, adding that he was shrinking the size of the Marine Corps, “based on my assumption that we’re not going to have a higher topline, more money,” in coming defense budgets.

If someone did write him a check for \$5 billion, Berger said his second question would be “Is this a onetime deposit in my bank account or is this a sustained effort? Because we’re not going to have a hollow force.”