

Secretary of the Navy Del Toro Champions Small Business Partnerships at San Francisco Fleet Week

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SAN FRANCISCO, CA – October 10, 2024 – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro addressed a gathering of small business leaders during San Francisco Fleet Week, emphasizing the vital role they play in supporting the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps today.

The event, titled “Breaking Barriers: A Department of the Navy & SBA Partnership for Small Business Success,” was held at the San Francisco SBA Business Office and brought together representatives from the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, regional APEX Accelerators, the National Defense Industrial Association, and other key stakeholders.

Secretary Del Toro highlighted the Department of the Navy’s commitment to small business partnerships, noting that contracts worth \$526 million have been awarded to small businesses located within 50 miles of San Francisco. He cited examples of successful collaborations, such as a \$2.89 million contract with Atomic, a Pleasanton-based small business, for the development of advanced tactical atomic clocks, and a \$451,000 contract with Arize AI, a Berkeley-based small business, for AI machine learning technology to enhance underwater threat detection.

“From my vantage point as Secretary of the Navy, a healthy, diverse industrial base made up of companies of all sizes—founded by American entrepreneurs from all walks of life—is absolutely crucial to the success of our Navy and our

Marine Corps,” said Secretary Del Toro.

The Secretary underscored the importance of small businesses in providing critical capabilities and services to support Sailors, Marines, and civilians stationed around the globe. He emphasized the need for innovation and technological advancements in areas such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, cybersecurity, and unmanned systems to maintain the Navy’s maritime dominance.

“We—along with our international partners and allies—are facing challenges across the globe,” said the Secretary. “Addressing these threats requires a whole-of-nation commitment to ensuring we have a strong Navy and Marine Corps that can defend our interests on a global scale.”

The Secretary’s remarks were followed by a small business roundtable discussion, where he engaged with entrepreneurs and industry leaders to discuss opportunities for collaboration and address the unique needs of small businesses in the defense sector. He encouraged businesses to connect with the Department of the Navy’s Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP) for guidance and support in navigating the federal procurement process.

In the evening, Secretary Del Toro attended the “Honor Our Fallen” concert at the Herbst Theater in the San Francisco War Memorial Building. The concert, hosted by The Center for Humanitarian Assistance, featured a performance by the U.S. Marine Corps 1st Marine Division Band and honored the fallen service men and women of the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts. A private reception followed to thank attending Gold Star families.

About the U.S. Department of the Navy Office of Small Business Programs:

The U.S. Department of the Navy Office of Small Business Programs maximizes opportunities for small businesses in Navy

contracts, ensuring they are integrated into the Navy's acquisition process.