

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

June 07, 2019

The Honorable Richard V. Spencer  
Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Spencer:

We are writing to request that the next available and appropriate warship be named in honor of Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO) Shannon Kent, a chief cryptologic technician in the United States Navy killed in action while deployed in Syria on January 16, 2019.

Soon after joining the Navy, Senior Chief Kent earned a position as one of the first women to work directly with U.S. Special Operations Forces performing highly-dangerous human intelligence and reconnaissance missions. During her first overseas deployment, Kent quickly developed a reputation as a top-tier intelligence professional thanks to her remarkable language skills and ability to master intelligence collection tradecraft. She personally developed targets for her task force, working with Iraqi operatives to collect intelligence that “contributed directly to the capture of hundreds of enemy insurgents and severely degraded enemy combat capability.” While deployed, she was also among the first women to directly participate in raids on high-value targets—gathering valuable time-sensitive information about insurgent networks.

Throughout her over 15-years of service, including five combat deployments, SCPO Kent continuously proved that she could not only keep up with, but lead, our military’s most highly-trained and capable service members. SCPO Kent’s achievements include becoming one of the first female graduates of the Naval Special Warfare Direct Support Course and serving as the noncommissioned officer in charge at the National Security Agency’s Operations Directorate. Due to her actions, SCPO Kent is directly credited with inspiring several programs for integrating women into Special Operations Forces.

While the American public may never know the full extent of SCPO Kent’s accomplishments while serving in support of our nation’s most sensitive missions, her numerous awards include the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, two Joint Service Commendation Medals, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Joint Service Achievement Medal. Her Bronze Star citation credits her with having “a lasting and measurable impact in combating enemies of the United States.” We believe that SCPO Kent deserves to be honored in a manner befitting of her noble service to our country and enduring contributions to the United States Navy.

Currently, of the 289 battle force ships in the fleet, only five are named in honor of women. Of the 53 named vessels under construction, only one is named in honor of a woman. We encourage

you to take steps to address this disparity and recognize the important role that woman service members have played throughout the Navy's storied history. Honoring Senior Chief Petty Officer Kent would be an excellent place to start.

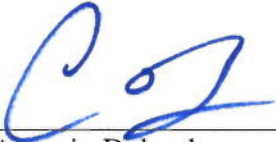
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Charles E. Schumer".

Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kirsten Gillibrand".

Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Antonio Delgado".

Antonio Delgado  
Member of Congress

cc:

Admiral John M. Richardson, USN  
Chief of Naval Operations

General Paul M. Nakasone, USA  
Director, National Security Agency