

Commander Trey Kennard of USS North Dakota Addresses Legislators, Praises Crew



CDR Trey Kennard addresses the House

Commander Trey Kennard, Commanding Officer of the USS North Dakota (SSN 784), addressed both the House and Senate Tuesday afternoon on the state of the vessel, a Virginia-class nuclear powered attack submarine.

After 6 years in operation and three deployments, the submarine is undergoing its first major maintenance since 2017. "During this maintenance period, the boat is receiving much needed repairs, executing periodic inspections, and upgrading to the latest technology from bow to stern," Kennard said. He noted that when complete, "the boat will be the most lethal platform to sail the seas."

The maintenance is expected to cost over \$475 million and is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2026. The work is on track to be finished on time or ahead of schedule. Once maintenance is complete, the USS North Dakota will move to its new home port at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Although the ship has been undergoing upgrades and repairs, her crew has not stopped serving and have completed trainings, deployments, qualification workloads, and service to the local community. "Dozens of sailors have served thousands of service hours, from town park cleanups, Habitat for Humanity builds, and speaking with local schools," Kennard told legislators.

The submarine's crew has received numerous commendations. In 2023, as the most junior boat in Submarine Squadron (CSS) 2, the crew received the 2023 Engineering Red E, Weapons White W, and Personnel White P for excellence in core areas of execution. In 2024, the crew received the CSS-2 Battle E for execution across all boats in the squadron--the third time the award has been received since USS North Dakota's commissioning.

"I can proudly say that in my 17 months of command so far, this ship has continuously improved and is the best I have ever served with in my nearly 19 years of service," Kennard said.

Kennard not only recognized the positive culture aboard the USS North Dakota, but in the state as well. He noted, "It is clear to me that the state loves our boat, and it makes us feel like a part of the state as a crew. The support that pours into our boat from our namesake state is the best I have ever seen in nearly 19 years of service."

Kennard ended his remarks by leading those present in reciting the ship's motto: "Strength from the soil, reapers of the deep."

Employee Spotlight



Jason Steckler started at the Legislative Council in 2008 and served as the Information Technology director until 2012 when he became the Administrative Director, overseeing the administrative services and information technology divisions. In 2024, his title was changed to Administrative and Operations Director. He is a 22-year veteran of the US Army and Army National Guard. He grew up in Dickinson, ND, and Mobridge, SD, and attended the University of Mary in Bismarck.

When he's not working, he enjoys spending time at the family's cabin on lake Sakakawea. Known for being a Green Bay Packer fan, it creates awkwardness with John Bjornson and Allen Knudson, who are not Packer backers.



1,068 Bills and Resolutions Introduced
647 House
421 Senate

1,738 Bills and Resolutions Requested

933 Bills Heard in Committee

261 Amendments Requested

135 Bills Passed in the House

117 Bills Passed in the Senate

2 Bills Enrolled

Important Dates

Feb. 10: Deadline to Refer House Bills to Approps

Feb. 10: Deadline to Refer Senate Bills to Approps

Feb. 25: Constitutional Amendment and Study Resolution Introduction Deadline

Feb. 25: Deadline to Report All Other Bills and Resolutions out of Committee

Feb. 28: Crossover Date for Bills

Photos from the Floor



Legislative Report



The 2025 Legislative Management Final Report is now available. Bound copies of the book are available by request, or the report can be [viewed online](#).

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