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Contact:

Jennifer Dellapenta  
(757) 380-3558

[Jennifer.Dellapenta@ngc.com](mailto:Jennifer.Dellapenta@ngc.com)

## Northrop Grumman Christens George H. W. Bush Aircraft Carrier

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Oct. 7, 2006 – Northrop Grumman today christened the nation’s 10th and final *Nimitz*-class aircraft carrier, *George H. W. Bush* (CVN 77). The ship’s namesake and 41st President of the United States, George H. W. Bush, attended the ceremony and became the first president in the shipyard’s 120-year history to participate in the christening of his namesake ship.

“I can’t wait to see this remarkable, state-of-the-art vessel go to sea,” Bush said, “and when it does, I want to get permission from the commander-in-chief to be on board. I hope the American people will accept my deepest gratitude for the chance to serve this nation, an honor that touches deep in my heart.”

Several members of the Bush family were on hand for the special occasion, including the former president’s wife Barbara and their daughter, Doro Bush Koch. Mrs. Koch serves as the ship’s sponsor and performed the traditional honor of breaking a bottle of American sparkling wine across the ship’s bow during the ceremony.

President George W. Bush also attended and honored his father during the ceremony as a special guest speaker.

“On this proud day,” President Bush said, “the children of George H.W. Bush bless their father’s name, the United States Navy honors his name, and the ship that bears his name sails into this young century as a symbol of America’s strength and freedom.”

Other officials participating in the ceremony included Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld; Secretary of the Navy Donald Winter; Virginia Senators John Warner and George Allen; Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine; Adm. Michael Mullen, Chief of Naval Operations; Ronald D. Sugar, chairman and chief executive officer of Northrop Grumman Corporation; and Mike Petters, president of Northrop Grumman Newport News.

“Today, we christen a great ship with a great namesake,” Sugar said. “She was built by people with pride and dedication, much like the crews who will man her.”

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Petters paid special tribute to the men and women who build aircraft carriers. “They do this work day in and day out in blistering heat, freezing cold and in the rain,” he said. “It is dangerous work. It is difficult and demanding work. And it is noble work.

“Every ship built here has proven a credit to our nation, and to the proud people who build them,” Petters added. “I know that this mighty ship, *George H.W. Bush*, will follow in that tradition.”

The *George H. W. Bush* is the nation's tenth and final *Nimitz*-class aircraft carrier. Northrop Grumman Newport News has built 11 of the U.S. Navy's 12 active carriers, including all 10 ships of the *Nimitz* class.

At 1,092 feet in length, *George H. W. Bush* is nearly as long as the Empire State Building is tall. Upon delivery to the Navy in late 2008, it will weigh 97,000 tons and carry more than 80 combat aircraft. Its top speed will exceed 30 knots and powered with two nuclear reactors, it will operate for more than 20 years without refueling. For additional information, visit [www.nn.northropgrumman.com/bush](http://www.nn.northropgrumman.com/bush).

Northrop Grumman Corporation is a global defense company headquartered in Los Angeles, Calif. Northrop Grumman provides technologically advanced, innovative products, services and solutions in systems integration, defense electronics, information technology, advanced aircraft, shipbuilding and space technology. With more than 120,000 employees and operations in all 50 states and 25 countries, Northrop Grumman serves U.S. and international military, government and commercial customers.

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