



News from
Councilmember Todd Gloria

District Three

NEWS RELEASE

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United States Navy Dedicates USNS Harvey Milk in San Francisco
Councilmember Todd Gloria Attends Naming of Vessel for Historic LGBT Civil Rights Leader and Navy Veteran

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (August 16, 2016) – Councilmember Todd Gloria joined the United States Navy today for a ceremony to name a naval vessel in honor of iconic LGBT civil rights leader and San Francisco City Supervisor Harvey Milk. Milk was a naval veteran who was stationed at Naval Base San Diego until being honorably discharged from service in 1955.

U.S. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus first announced the Navy's intentions to name the ship after Harvey Milk on July 14, 2016. The USNS Harvey Milk will be a Military Sealift Command Fleet Oiler, and the second of the John Lewis class of oilers, which will also include the USNS Sojourner Truth, USNS Robert F. Kennedy, USNS Lucy Stone, and USNS Earl Warren.

"Harvey Milk was a political force, who rallied people to take pride in their identity, empower themselves to have a voice in our democracy, and fight for freedom and equality for all in our society," said Councilmember Gloria. **"Beyond his service to his country as an elected official and as a veteran, Harvey inspired those in the gay community and beyond to demand their rights and participate in politics in order to prove that America's diversity can be its greatest asset. Today's naming ceremony for the USNS Harvey Milk is a significant honor to the memory of a great figure in American history and a strong affirmation that all those who serve our country are worthy of our highest respect and praise."**

Councilmember Todd Gloria, who in 2012 led the San Diego City Council in dedicating the first Harvey Milk Street in the United States, was invited by U.S. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus to attend the naming ceremony in San Francisco. Councilmember Gloria was among the San Diego delegation, which also included San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, San Diego City Commissioner Nicole Murray-Ramirez, San Diego Airport Authority Board Member Robert H. Gleason, San Diego Foreign Affairs Commission Chair Bruce Abrams, former President of American Veterans for Equality Bob Lehman, and Ben Dillingham III of the San Diego County Veterans Advisory Council. A major influence in the Navy's decision to dedicate the USNS Harvey Milk was a letter-writing campaign waged by San Diego LGBT leaders and communities across the nation encouraging the U.S. Navy to name a ship after Milk following the repeal of the U.S. Department of Defense's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in 2011.

"We have made much progress over the last few years with the repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' and the Supreme Court's seminal ruling on same-sex marriage, but there is much work to be done to ensure the rights of all are protected," said Councilmember Todd Gloria. **"Harvey Milk**

would encourage us all to keep working until our political system is free of discrimination and reflects the values of the diverse population it was founded to represent.”

The USNS Harvey Milk will be constructed by General Dynamics NASSCO in San Diego and the expected completion date of the ship is 2018-2019.

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