WASHINGTON – Congressman Jo Bonner, R-Alabama, voted for legislation Tuesday evening clearing the way for the Navy to purchase littoral combat ships from Mobile's Austal USA. The dual buy authorization was included in a short-term budget bill funding the federal government through March 2011.

"We've finally cleared the last hurdle for the Navy's purchase of up to ten LCS ships from Mobile's Austal USA," Congressman Bonner said. "The bill is now headed to the president for his signature and then we are going to put a large red ribbon on it for delivery to the Gulf Coast just in time for Christmas.

"This is wonderful news for Austal which will see a doubling of the local workforce and a significant expansion of its Mobile shipyard. It's also a great deal for the Navy which will immediately benefit from two different LCS designs in a sustained competition ensuring the best capability for our sailors and the lowest price for the taxpayers."

In January, Austal commissioned the *U.S.S. Independence* (LCS-2) in Mobile, launching a new type of warship of cutting edge design, both fast and highly maneuverable. Austal's state-of-the-art module manufacturing facility has symbolized Mobile's rebirth as a Navy ship building city.