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PRESS CONTACT:

Sam Pfeifle

207-749-0298, sam@westgraycreative.com

**Climate Activists To Protest USS Carl Levin Christening**

Statewide climate justice and peace groups will rally outside the “christening” of the USS Carl Levin at Bath Iron Works this Saturday, in an effort to draw attention to the massive emission of greenhouse gases contributed by the U.S. military. As politicians and luminaries gather to celebrate the creation of yet another massive consumer of fossil fuels for which no one can articulate any actual need, activists will seek to provide education as to the harm that is being perpetrated on the people of the world in the name of “defense.”

Speakers and protesters will gather at 10 a.m. at BIW’s South Gate, on Washington Avenue, in Bath.

Lisa Savage, former candidate for U.S. Senate and founder of the group Maine Natural Guard, is among those expected to speak. “Military emissions have been exempt from climate accords for too long,” said Savage, who noted President Joe Biden is scheduled to attend the so-called COP26 international climate conference in Glasgow this November, where military emissions are verboten. “The greatest security threat we face today is the rapidly accelerating climate crisis. Building polluting weapons of war is an outdated and deadly response. Instead, we need conversion of facilities like BIW to manufacture of things that actually respond to the climate crisis, like renewable energy and public transportation infrastructure, in order to create thousands of additional jobs building solutions to the crisis — rather than contributing to it.”

The Navy’s 510-foot, 9,200-ton Arleigh Burke-class destroyer will be christened by three daughters of former senator Carl M. Levin, and it will bear a special crest dedicated to his accomplishments, including imagery that evokes the Great Lakes, which Levin fought to protect as senator from Michigan. Ironically, the USS Levin will simply continue to contribute to the negative impacts of climate change on the Great Lakes, which have seen increasingly lower water levels and reduced ice cover due to elevated temperatures, causing negative impacts to Michigan’s economy.

“It’s become so absolutely apparent,” said scheduled speaker Dud Hendrick, a member of Veterans for Peace who lives in Deer Isle, “that even the most dedicated and resolute militarist has to concede the fact we have enormous climate crisis-related changes on the near horizon and America’s persistent and insistent militarism is the major culprit.”

Bruce Gagnon, of Bath and Coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, noted the protest will honor former BIW worker Peter Woodruff. “Peter stood

with us for many years at BIW,” Gagnon said. “He was known for his effort to get BIW workers to sign a petition calling on the company to build offshore wind turbines to help deal with our current climate crisis. Peter risked his job to gather more than 800 worker signatures and then made bumper stickers that workers put on their lunch pails and vehicles that said: 'Save BIW, Build wind turbines'.”

Due to the rising rate of COVID infections in Maine, participants will be asked to mask and observe social distancing at the event.

Organizations sponsoring the event include Americans Who Tell the Truth, Citizens Opposing Active Sonar Threats (COAST), Durham Quaker Meeting, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, Island Peace & Justice, Maine Natural Guard, Maine Veterans for Peace, Maine War Tax Resistance Resource Center, Midcoast Peace & Justice Group, Pax Christi Maine, Peace Action Maine, Peace & Justice Center of Eastern Maine, Peace & Justice Group of Waldo County, PeaceWorks of Greater Brunswick, Peninsula Peace & Justice, and 350 Maine.

References:

“The U.S. Employment Effects of Military and Domestic Spending Priorities: 2011 Update” by [Robert Pollin](#) and Heidi Garrett-Peltier (<https://www.peri.umass.edu/publication/item/449-the-u-s-employment-effects-of-military-and-domestic-spending-priorities-2011-update>).

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