

**Title:** Building a Fleet in an Era of Fiscal Constraint

**Speaker:** Dr. Eric Labs

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**Where:** Conolly Hall room C-138

**POC:** Dr. Peter Dombrowski

**Synopsis:**

The U.S. Navy believes that the challenge to U.S. allies and interests in the Pacific posed by a rapidly growing Chinese navy and an increasingly sophisticated battle network requires a larger, more distributed fleet. At the same time, the demands on the federal budget and the defense budget in particular make it unlikely that the Navy would receive the additional \$30 billion to \$40 billion more per year the service will need to build a much larger fleet. In the view of many defense analysts, the increasing technological sophistication and targeting capabilities of China's military make it imperative that the U.S. Navy distribute its firepower among a larger number of smaller and less expensive ships and unmanned systems, rather than a smaller number of more capable but much more expensive platforms. This study will look at ways to do that within an overall budget close to today's levels.

**Bio:**

Dr. Eric Labs is the Senior Analyst for Naval Forces and Weapons at the Congressional Budget Office in Washington, D.C. He specializes in issues related to the procurement, budgeting, and sizing of the forces for the Department of the Navy. Dr. Labs has testified before Congress numerous times and published many reports under the auspices of the Congressional Budget Office as well as articles and papers in academic journals and conferences, including the U.S. Naval Institute's Proceedings, Sea Power magazine, the Naval War College Review, and Security Studies. He has given presentations to a variety of industry, government, and academic audiences. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral John Richardson awarded him the Navy Superior Public Service Award in February 2019. Dr. Labs has received CBO's highest honor, the Director's Award for Exceptional Achievement, in 2001, 2003, 2007, and 2014.

Dr. Labs received his doctorate in political science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and graduated from Tufts University, summa cum laude, in 1988. He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in his junior year. Dr. Labs worked for the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis in Cambridge, Massachusetts and, from 1994 to 1995, and as a Visiting Scholar at the Center for International Security Studies at the University of Maryland. He has been with the Congressional Budget Office since 1995.