

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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PORTS & FERRY FUNDING PART OF MASSIVE \$1.2 TRILLION INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE

The \$1.2 trillion dollar Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, passed this week by the Senate after intense negotiations, will pour billions into programs benefiting ports and ferry services, among other things. Much of the overall package costs includes normal annual funding that is poured into highway and other infrastructure projects, but about \$550 billion of the bill is new spending that will be sunk into a series of needed projects including ports, roads, and bridges, railroads, the power grid, cyber security, and a series of other undertakings.

\$17 billion would go to ports – much of it via Army Corps of Engineers – for port infrastructure. Some of those funds would include state grants for basic essential ferry service in rural areas (\$1 billion) and for Federal Transit Administration grants for the construction of ferries and terminals. (\$570 million). Among other ferry units, the Alaska Marine Highway System would benefit from the Senate-passed bill - \$1 billion was slotted for a new service supporting rural communities and \$73 million for ferry boat construction. Also included in the package is spending for the establishment of a Department of Transportation pilot program to provide grants for the purchase of electric or low-emission ferries (\$250 million). Another \$2.25 billion would be directed toward a Maritime Administration port infrastructure development program.

The Senate passed the bipartisan bill in a 69-30 vote. The House will not address it until the completion of the August recess. Following the Senate passage of the bill, Democrats began work on a \$3.5 trillion follow-up bill that would offer numerous initiatives addressing education, health and child care, paid leave, and climate change among other areas. That Democratic bill is expected to sharply divide lawmakers and move along party lines. Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced that the House wouldn't address the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill until both pieces of legislation are cleared by the Senate.

FIRST OF THREE NEWBUILD S.I. FERRIES ON ITS WAY TO NYC

The first of three newbuild Staten Island Ferries has been completed at the Eastern Shipbuilding facility in Florida and is enroute to New York City to join the fleet. The MV STAFF SERGEANT MICHAEL H. OLLIS began the 12-day journey from Port St. Joe, Florida under tow on Friday, fully certified and passenger-ready. Upon arrival, the ferry will be staged at Caddell Dry Dock for cleaning and another round of trials and training. It is scheduled to begin transporting passengers in the Fall.

A second Ollis-class ferry is set to join the fleet by the end of the year with a third vessel soon after. The OLLIS is named after an Army Staff Sergeant who died protecting fellow soldiers in Afghanistan

in 2013. The second vessel, SANDY GROUND, honors one of the nation's first black settlements – located on Staten Island, which also served as a stop on the Underground Railroad. The third, the DOROTHY DAY, honors the social activist and journalist who spent decades on Staten Island's South Shore.

The shipyard said the new ferries are larger, reflect modern technology, and will operate more safely in extreme weather conditions. They feature popular design elements of past Staten Island Ferries and new customer-service amenities such as more comfortable seating and phone-charging outlets and an oval upper-deck promenade that will serve as an outdoor “walking track” for ferry riders. They have the latest in marine technology for energy efficiency and environmental friendliness. There are design features on the vessels that are part of the emergency response plan with the city.

The three Ollis-class double-ended 4,500 passenger ferries, are from a design provided by Elliott Bay Design Group, with each ferry featuring four ABS Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD) L12ME23B @ 750 rpm EPA Tier 4 marine propulsion engines with two engines powering one ABS Reintjes DUP 3000 P combining gear and one ABS 36 RV6 ECS/285-2 Voith Schneider Propeller at each end of the vessel. Power generation is provided by three ABS, EPA Tier 3 marine continuous duty diesel generator sets, Caterpillar C18 driving 480 V, 60 Hz, 3-phase generators rated at 425 kW at 0.8 P.F. @1800 rpm.

TRUMKA TO LIE IN REPOSE AT AFL-CIO; SHULER IS ACTING PRESIDENT

Following his unexpected death at the age of 72 a week ago, fallen AFL-CIO leader Richard Trumka will lie in repose at the AFL-CIO Headquarters in Washington D.C. this weekend. On Saturday, Aug. 14, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. ET, he will have his last appearance at the House of Labor, a place and an idea that he loved so much (815 Black Lives Matter Plaza - 16th St. NW). Trumka, who devoted his life to working people, was a relentless champion of workers' rights, workplace safety, worker-centered trade, democracy and so much more. He was also a devoted father, grandfather, husband, brother, coach, colleague and friend. There will be a large public memorial at a later date.

The AFL-CIO's Executive Council is scheduled to meet on August 20th to select a leader to fill the remainder of Trumka's term. AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler is the current Acting President. A more permanent successor will be named at the next AFL-CIO Convention, which is set to take place in June 2022 in Philadelphia.

Shuler issued a recent statement building upon her earlier remarks mourning the death of her longtime colleague and friend while casting an eye toward the future of the Federation. “Rich cared deeply about working people. He wanted to create a better life for every single working person. He dedicated himself to that mission, and he never stopped pushing forward. He is a legend in the labor movement and will be remembered in every fight to better the lives of working people. He gave the labor movement everything he had, and so will we. I know what we're capable of, and I'm hopeful for the future. We can grow, inspire and experiment, harnessing our collective power to reach into workplaces all across this country. I believe in my bones the labor movement is the single most powerful vehicle for progress, and this is a moment for us to lead societal and cultural transformations. It's time to leverage our power to bring women and people of color from the margins to the center at work, in our unions and in our economy. And we need to be the center of gravity for incubating new ideas that will unleash unprecedented union growth.

“As we mourn the loss of Brother Rich, we must also come together to finish the work. We will pass the newly renamed Richard L. Trumka Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act. It’s what workers need and it’s what Rich would have wanted from us. We’ll take time to grieve, but we won’t slow down in our pursuit of a better future for all of America’s workers. We are going to get through this together...”

SUBMIT A COOL PHOTO - YOU COULD WIN \$15K IN THE “UNIONS POWER AMERICA” CONTEST

Ahead of Labor Day(September 6), Union Plus is honoring hardworking union members who are putting our country back on its feet. To thank you for making a difference, they’re giving away \$130,000 in prizes, including a Grand Prize of \$15,000.

Union Plus programs provide a vast range of money-saving benefits and services and are available to M.E.B.A. members, applicants, retirees and our affiliates. M.E.B.A. members, retirees and their families - as well as members of affiliated M.E.B.A. unions - are eligible courtesy of the Union’s enrollment in dozens of moneysaving U.P. programs ranging from life insurance to financing children’s educations.

The “Unions Power America Contest” honors the hardworking union members who are rebuilding America’s infrastructure and economy. Entering is easy – just submit a photo of you working hard at your union job or in your community along with a detailed caption describing how you’re powering America. Entries will be judged based on content and creativity, so have fun and wow them with your story! In early September, they’ll award one hundred \$1,000 prizes, a \$5,000 Second Prize, a \$10,000 First Prize and a \$15,000 Grand Prize!!

Go to www.unionplus.org/laborday to fill out the entry form and upload your photo. The contest ends August 22.

MARINERS & LEGACY OF FOURTH ARM OF DEFENSE TO BE SPOTLIGHTED AT UPCOMING AMMV CONVENTION

The American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) have shored up details of their upcoming National Convention that will be held in Linthicum Heights, MD at MITAGS on September 21-24. The AMMV is an organization of active and retired mariners that trumpets the vital role of the men and women of the Merchant Marine and their service to the country during peace and war.

Registration is open and M.E.B.A. members, applicants and retirees are encouraged to attend as the AMMV celebrates the legacy of the U.S. Merchant Marine and spotlights WWII merchant mariner veterans in attendance (as many as 18). There will be several special speakers including motivational speaker, businessman and WWII mariner Dave Yoho, author and reporter Rita Cosby, maritime author William Geroux and maritime historian and pundit Dr. Salvatore Mercogliano. In addition, there will be many other special guests, entertainment, a showing of nautical art, presentation of awards and the unveiling of the design of the Congressional Gold Medal that will honor WWII mariners.

There are three ways to register: (1) Mail in Registration Form w/check; (2) Register online at: Convention Registration Form - American Merchant Marine Veterans (<https://ammv.us/register/>) (3) Call AMMV HQ at (475) 470-9200 to register & submit payment over the phone.

CRUISE INDUSTRY BEGINS COMEBACK

Norwegian Cruise Line and other large passenger vessel companies operating in U.S. waters are looking to rebound as they begin their first cruises after the onset of the COVID age. NCL's NORWEGIAN ENCORE began its Seattle to Alaska itinerary last week and the NORWEGIAN GEM is set to become the first NCL ship to sail from Florida since the pandemic as the vessel readies for its Caribbean run next week. The company resumed international fleet voyages earlier this summer.

The cruise industry making U.S. stops has been sidelined for a year and a half and had to navigate stringent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines to get to this point. NCL put an exhaustive plan in place to guarantee passenger safety including 100% vaccinations for crew and passengers, initial reduced capacities and other extensive COVID-19 safety measures. But a new Florida law that barred companies from requiring proof of vaccinations threatened to topple the company's new business model and undermine their plans for ensuring passenger safety. Under the Florida law, NCL was facing millions of dollars in fines for each voyage leaving the state if they proceeded with the plan. But last week, a federal appeals court judge let a lower court ruling stand and issued a preliminary injunction allowing the company to require a so-called "vaccine passport." Florida is experiencing a new deadly COVID wave fueled by the Delta variant. According to the Johns Hopkins University tracker, new state COVID cases are cropping up at over twice the national rate, adjusting for population. NCL, which plans to keep its vaccine mandate in effect for at least the next two months, said that their policy has been in effect aboard all of its vessels around the globe "without issue" except in Florida. The industry as a whole has begun its restart albeit with plenty of hiccups. COVID cases continue to cause cancellations and delays, and other discovered cases during cruises have forced companies to enact emergency protocols resulting in a sometimes diminished experience for other passengers.

Norwegian Cruise Line-America had previously hoped to restart operations for its U.S.-flag vessel PRIDE OF AMERICA earlier this year then delayed sailings until November. Currently, the start date is set for January 2022. The M.E.B.A.-crewed vessel is the lone large U.S.-flag passenger vessel and also the only cruise ship operating exclusively between the Hawaiian Islands. Enthusiasm for cruising has not died. Most of the rooms for listed voyages have already sold out.

ITF ADDS TO FOC LIST

The International Transport Workers' Federation has added seven more countries to its Flag of Convenience (FOC) shipping list swelling the number of countries which take registration fees but avoid flag state responsibilities. The majority of ship registrations in the newly added states are taken from owners with no link whatsoever to that country. They are exploiting a loophole in international law in order to employ cheap labor and avoid taxes.

Four of the countries added to the list – Cook Islands, Palau, St Kitts & Nevis and Togo – are signatories to the Maritime Labour Convention. The other three countries are Cameroon, Sierra Leone and Tanzania (Zanzibar).

"What flags of convenience countries do is morally irresponsible," said David Heindel, chair of the ITF Seafarers' Section. "They all take the registration fees but do not have the will or the means to ensure the wellbeing of the seafarers who operate the vessels. The crew-change crisis is the perfect example of the havoc the FOC system creates. When becoming a flag state, a large responsibility must be accepted along with it. Ticking the boxes is not being responsible. Too many seafarers end up suffering so that ship owners can trim a few dollars from their crew cost."

The ITF and its team of 134 coordinators, inspectors and union contacts, including M.E.B.A. Inspector Eric White, continue to assist seafarers in these types of situations. They make sure they have basic amenities, work to get the seafarers home and recover unpaid wages. But all too often they find the flags of convenience scheme gets in the way. “For more than 70 years the ITF has fought against this crazy system,” said Steve Trowsdale, the ITF Inspectorate Coordinator. “Many flags of convenience countries (including four of the newly listed) ratify the Maritime Labour Convention which is designed to protect seafarers. But in practice, those countries simply ignore the MLC, even when we write to them demanding action.” The FOC system has been blamed by the ITF for exacerbating the crew change crisis, as FOC countries fail to support seafarers in need of repatriation, as well as worsening the recent spate of crew abandonment.

JAMIE BUTLER FRISBEE GOLF TOURNAMENT IS SUNDAY, SEPT. 19

The M.E.B.A. family is invited to take part in a Disc Golf Tournament at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School to benefit the M.E.B.A. Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF). The M.M.M.M.F. Invitational Jamie Butler Memorial Disc Golf Tournament will take place on Sunday, September 19th (at 1300). Jamie was a 1983 CMES cadet school graduate who shipped as an M.E.B.A. Chief Engineer for years and served as the Baltimore hall dispatcher before he sailed into the sunset late last year at the age of 59.

The Disc Golf Invitational will be open only to Members, Applicants, Retirees, staff and employers. The \$25 entry fee will benefit the 4MF and the Memorial Park. As you know, the Memorial was created to honor fallen seafarers who have delivered the goods and answered the call of this country since 1775. The tournament winner will have his or her name engraved on the M.M.M.M.F. Maritime Heritage Cup proudly displayed at the CMES Lounge. You can contact 4MF Chairman Bill Van Loo for additional information. He can be reached at bvanloo@bvlworks.org

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*

Monday, September 6 – Labor Day – All Halls Closed

Tuesday, September 7 – Boston@1200; CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Seattle-Fife@1300;

Wednesday, September 8 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online Headquarters “Town Hall” Meeting@1200 (No Voting)

Thursday, September 9 – L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, September 10 – Honolulu@1100

-----FINISHED WITH ENGINES-----



The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated track record of readiness, safety, and loyalty in answering America's call to action in times of both peace and war is unrivaled in the world. M.E.B.A. HQ – Phone: (202) 638-5355; mebahq@mebaunion.org. Visit us on Facebook. For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – marco@mebaunion.org. Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.