

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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RSC BUDGET OUTLINE PLOTS JONES ACT REPEAL

A group of 152 Republicans in Congress have called for the repeal of the Jones Act as part of a broad budget outline offered by their coalition, the Republican Study Committee. The RSC is a right-leaning caucus founded in 1973 dedicated toward promoting “a strong, principled legislative agenda that will limit government, strengthen our national defense, boost America’s economy, preserve traditional values and balance our budget.” Led by Congressman Mark Walker (R-NC), the Committee recently issued an outline of their recommended Fiscal Year 2018 budget encapsulating RSC ideals entitled “Securing America’s Future Economy” (SAFE).

Amidst its proposals for reforming the tax code, jettisoning the Davis-Bacon Act and implementing a National Right to Work scheme, the RSC outline calls for the end of “cronyism that uses the power of government to pick winners and losers in the economy, such as the Export-Import Bank and the Jones Act.”

Though the RSC outline serves as a guideline for Conservative thinking, it is not being treated as a blueprint for the budget process. However its provisions will likely be used as talking points during ongoing budget discussion. The release of the RSC proposal comes on the heels of Sen. John McCain’s latest attack against the Jones Act with his newly-introduced bill (S. 1561) that would surrender American mariner jobs to foreign counterparts.

BUZBY CONFIRMED AS NEW MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

Navy Rear Admiral Mark Buzby has been confirmed as the next Maritime Administrator. Buzby’s nomination was packaged with several other noncontroversial nominees needing approval from the full Senate. That vote concluded late this afternoon with no surprises and nominees were confirmed by unanimous consent.

Buzby becomes the 10th Administrator of MarAd since the agency came under Department of Transportation control in 1981. The M.E.B.A. had an excellent working relationship with Rear Admiral Buzby during his service with the Military Sealift Command and we are eager to work with him again to further our industry.

MATSON PURCHASES SHIP FOR NEW MARSHALL ISLANDS SERVICE

Matson Navigation has added another ship to its fleet and will enter the vessel into a new direct U.S.-flag service between Honolulu and the Marshall Islands. The company is completing the purchase of the 707-TEU container ship MARSTAN from Sealift Inc. The vessel, built in 2000, will be converted into a geared container ship and renamed KAMOKUIKI, which translates to 'small island or vessel' in the Hawaiian language.

The ship will be fitted with two 45-ton cranes that can be joined to handle heavy lift cargoes before it is delivered to Matson in late 2017. It will be well-suited to the island trade with its small stature, two cranes, hydraulic folding hatch covers, and extreme maneuverability produced by a bow thruster and flap rudder, which allows docking without tugs. The ship is expected to go into service in March 2018. As part of the new biweekly service, it will call at three ports in the Marshall Islands - Kwajalein, Ebeye and Majuro.

Matson has served the Marshall Islands since 1972. It currently serves Kwajalein, Ebeye and Majuro from the U.S. West Coast via Guam, where westbound containerized and bulk cargo is transhipped to Matson's Micronesia service. The new service from Honolulu will deliver cargo from the U.S. West Coast to Kwajalein, Ebeye and Majuro with a transit time of approximately two weeks, depending on the West Coast port, compared to three weeks or more with the current service.

M.E.B.A. has agreed to a new Memorandum of Understanding covering the vessel.

EXPECTED ILWU APPROVAL OF 3-YEAR EXTENSION

Though official results won't be released until tomorrow, the ILWU announced that it appears members will ratify a contract extension that will ensure West Coast labor stability on the docks until July 2022. The ballot for the ratification vote was sent out in May to longshore workers at 29 ports in California, Oregon and Washington. Late last week, the ILWU announced that early reporting from their locals indicated that the contract extension would pass.

The extension raises wages, lowers the minimum retirement age, and increases employer contributions to worker pension plans.

"The ILWU was founded on principles of democracy, and the rank-and-file always have the last word on their contracts," said ILWU International President Bob McEllrath. "There was no shortage of differing views during the year-long debate leading up to this vote, and members didn't take this step lightly. In the end, the members made the final decision to extend the contract for three years."

Along with the M.E.B.A., the ILWU is part of the Maritime Labor Alliance (MLA) that also includes the ARA, IBU, ILA and the MM&P. The six-union alliance fights to protect MLA member jurisdictions, working conditions and labor rights.

Pacific Maritime Association President James McKenna hailed the news saying that the extension will allow the West Coast waterfront "to attract more market share and demonstrate that our ports and our workforce are truly world-class...I look forward to working with ILWU President Bob McEllrath in the months ahead to ensure that the West Coast sets the standard for service and efficiency, and is the destination of choice for cargo entering and exiting the United States."

WSF MEMBERS TO ELECT NEW REP.

M.E.B.A. members working for the Washington State Ferry system will elect a new Representative following the conclusion of Isaac Seidman's 2-year service in that position. Isaac did great work with the unit. He worked diligently and successfully for a new WSF contract, aided in organizing Port Engineers and helped bring a new affiliate into the M.E.B.A. fold (the Ferry Agents, Supervisors and Project Administrators Association (FASPAA)). He also was instrumental in putting together the recent Inland Transportation Coalition (ITC) conference held at the School in June.

The bargaining unit will have a nomination and balloting period to elect his replacement. Former WSF Rep. Bill Knowlton is back at the hall on a temporary basis to work the position until Isaac's successor is tapped. Communications should be sent to the new email address set up for the Washington State Ferry Representative - wsfrep@mebaunion.org.

NTSB DIGEST: LESSONS LEARNED FROM MARITIME ACCIDENTS

The lessons learned from the investigation of 27 major maritime accidents involving loss of life, injuries and property damage are detailed in the National Transportation Safety Board's Safer Seas Digest 2016, released online late last week.

The publication is a compendium of the marine accident reports that the agency adopted or issued during calendar year 2016. The 68-page Safer Seas Digest 2016 contains information that can help mariners at the deckplate level prevent future accidents, and can help maritime industry "C-suites" build and sustain a culture of safety at sea.

The lessons learned in the Safer Seas Digest 2016 are highlighted in 10 categories including Standard Maintenance and Repair Procedures, Operational Testing Procedures, Operating in Strong Currents, Familiarization with Local Recommendations, Bridge Resource Management, Safety Equipment and Access to High-Risk Spaces.

The remaining three categories, Distraction, Fatigue, and Use of Medication While Operating Vessels, relate to issues on the NTSB's Most Wanted List of Transportation Safety Improvements, highlighting the multi-modal nature of these threats to transportation safety. The Safer Seas Digest 2016 digital version provides mariners with links from the digest's case summaries to the full reports and related documents of the investigations on the NTSB's website, giving mariners access to the complete body of work of the NTSB's Office of Marine Safety. It is available online at <https://go.usa.gov/xRQgC>.

RANK & FILE INPUT SOUGHT FOR UPCOMING MAERSK TALKS

The Union will begin negotiations on all three M.E.B.A./MLL contracts (MLL, E-Ships, and M-Ships) starting in two weeks' time. The M.E.B.A. is seeking input and participation from our members and applicants who have recently worked under any of our contracts with MLL.

Negotiations for all three M.E.B.A./MLL contracts will take place at the same time. Permanent and longtime employees who feel they have pertinent information or ideas to add to the conversation should send an email to jcallahan@mebaunion.org or call the NY/NJ hall at (201) 433-7700. Please email your priorities for any contract items that should be amended, withdrawn or added.

The first bargaining session is scheduled for August 17 at MLL Headquarters in Norfolk, VA. Talks will shift to M.E.B.A. Headquarters in late August.

G&W RAFFLE TIX - DONATIONS NEEDED

Raffle tickets to assist the M.E.B.A.'s Good & Welfare Fund are being snatched up at Union halls around the country with \$5,000 at stake for the winner. The \$2 tickets are currently on sale for the 50/50 Raffle that will be held on October 12th in conjunction with a Silent Auction & Fundraiser at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School. 5,000 tickets have been printed meaning that, if they sell out, the winner will receive 50% of the proceeds (\$5,000) with the other half going to the Fund. The raffle is open to anyone who wants to purchase a ticket.

Ticketholders don't need to be present at the drawing to win. Every ticket you buy puts another dollar into the Good & Welfare Fund. To help support the upcoming Good & Welfare Auction & Fundraiser, the G&W Committee is asking for donations of gifts and prizes such as nautical items, sporting memorabilia, art, etc. You can contact Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo at Headquarters or any Branch Agent to forward monetary or item donations. ***Remember, your contributions to the fund are tax deductible*** so please give liberally in order to help a Union brother or sister in need. M.E.B.A. members are encouraged to support this important cause.

SIGN UP FOR M.E.B.A. VACATION PLAN DIRECT DEPOSIT

Designed for convenience, M.E.B.A. members can help themselves by taking advantage of the Vacation Plan Direct Deposit that will help save them time and ease Plans processing costs. Authorization forms are available from the Plans Office, Plans Outport Offices and at the Plans' website – www.mebaplans.org (Forms, Vacation). Complete details are available on the Plans' site as well. Contact (800) 811-6322 or vacation@mebaplans.org for more info.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monday, August 7 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;
Tuesday, August 8 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;
Wednesday, August 9 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;
Thursday, August 10 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;
Friday, August 11 - 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 proven 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 contact: Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – marco@mebaunion.org