

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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NEW FOUR-YEAR CONTRACT FOR CAPE MAY-LEWES FERRY MEMBERS

A new four-year contract for members sailing in the Cape May/Lewes Ferry fleet has gone into effect after receiving the necessary approvals including ratification from bargaining unit members.

Overseen by the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA), the ferry system is jointly operated by the States of New Jersey and Delaware and any agreements must receive approval of the DRBA Board of Commissioners as well as the Governors of both Delaware and New Jersey. In 2014, that arrangement became unnecessarily politicized when Governor Chris Christie refused to approve modest pay increases for workers who had gone a prolonged period without a raise. It took another two years for contract approval. This time, the process went a lot more smoothly and the contract received all the necessary approvals. Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan headed up the negotiating team which included strong rank and file participation by Don Miller, Mellisa Velli, Travis Worster, and Mark Wolf. The contract is retroactive to January 1, 2018 and will run through December 31, 2022. The agreement has been sent to the halls and is available for review.

SUMMER BARGAINING CONTINUES ON EACH COAST

Members will be wrapping up a ratification vote tomorrow on a tentative agreement covering Matson deep-sea engineers onboard the A3 and CV2600 vessels, as well as the newbuilds. An M.E.B.A. negotiating team, led by Executive V.P. Adam Vokac, goes back to the table next week in Oakland to work on an agreement for the Matson Port Engineers.

On the East Coast, reopener talks covering economic terms in the Hapag/MTL contract will take place at M.E.B.A. Headquarters next week. Gulf Coast V.P. Erin Bertram is heading up talks for the M.E.B.A. team that will include M.E.B.A. President Marshall Ainley, Contracts Rep. Mark S. Gallagher and a rank and file presence.

M.E.B.A. will participate in talks on the West Coast with American President Lines the following week for a new contract covering Deep-Sea/Port Engineers. The current agreement expires on September 30. The sides will meet the week of August 20.

SHOW-ME STATE DEFEATS 'RIGHT TO WORK' LAW

Missouri voters at the polls on Tuesday rescued their state from right-to-work status after 63% of ballots rejected corporate designs to undermine working families. The Show-Me-State said "No" to "Proposition A" which would have locked in Missouri as the 28th right-to-work state in the nation.

Disgraced Governor Eric Greitens, who has since resigned, made right-to-work the law of the land last year after the Republican legislature green-lighted the measure which was bankrolled by corporate interests in a bid to cripple labor unions. But the law came into question and was put on hold when a successful petition drive won the right to put the measure before voters in a referendum. Prop A proponents mischaracterized the initiative as a boon for the economy and working families. But labor interests undertook a widespread grassroots effort to inform voters of the truth and knocked on hundreds of thousands of doors, made a million phone calls and visited workers at over 1,000 job sites.

Actor John Goodman helped the cause with a radio ad critical of Prop A. “The bill will not give you the right to work,” Goodman pointed out in the radio spot. “It’s being sold as a way to help Missouri workers, but look a little deeper and you’ll see it’s all about corporate greed.”

An Economic Policy Institute study concluded that workers in Right to Work states make \$5,000 less on average per year coupled with watered-down benefits and protections. In addition, such states have higher workplace and infant mortality rates, higher poverty rates and invest less in education.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said the Missouri vote is indicative of “a true groundswell” for working families. “The defeat of this poisonous anti-worker legislation is a victory for all workers across the country...Tonight is the latest act of working people changing a rigged system that for decades has been favoring corporations, the mega wealthy and the privileged few. From statehouses and city councils to the halls of Congress, working people are fighting back; and this November, we will elect our allies and retire our enemies.”

TRUMKA: ‘WORKING PEOPLE TAKING MATTERS INTO OUR OWN HANDS’

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka spoke to reporters last week at a *Christian Science Monitor* breakfast highlighting the wave of collective action sweeping the country. “We’re living through the kind of defining moment that can leave its mark for a generation,” he said. “A moment that will determine what kind of economy we work in and what kind of society we live in.”

Trumka told reporters that working people aren’t backing down from the challenges they face and are surging to collective action. They are rising to the moment, he said, and you should ‘look to the streets’ if you want to see the evidence.

Trumka also noted, “The fact is, working people are taking matters into our own hands. We’re looking inward to position ourselves to shape the future of work and the labor movement. We’re organizing. We’re mobilizing. And we’re winning. Our job this election season is to secure that promise for even more working people by filling the halls of power with genuine champions of collective bargaining...We’re unleashing the largest and most strategic member-to-member political program in our history, sparking change by doing what organizers do best: talking to each other. If you want to see that power on full display, just look at what’s going on in Missouri right now....Working people took matters into our own hands. We were tasked with getting 100,000 signatures to put [“right to work”] to a statewide vote. You know what we did? We organized and turned in more than 300,000 signatures. The election is Tuesday. And let me tell you something: We’re going to win.”

GAO CALLS FOR SWIFT ISSUANCE OF NATIONAL MARITIME STRATEGY

A Government watchdog agency has urged the Department of Transportation to expeditiously finalize its National Maritime Strategy (NMS), as mandated by Congress, and set a timeline for its release. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) says that their recommendation of swift issuance of the strategy is based on concerns that the continued erosion of the U.S.-flag fleet and shrinking pool of qualified American mariners threatens the nation's ability to meet national defense needs. The agency stated that "recent increases in the cost differential of U.S.-flag vessels versus foreign-flag vessels and decreases in the volumes of government cargo have made it more challenging to ensure the financial viability of U.S.-flag vessels."

As envisioned, the NMS would offer a path forward to improve the competitiveness of the U.S.-flag fleet, reduce regulatory burdens, increase the use of short sea shipping and enhance U.S. shipbuilding capacity. In a Coast Guard bill signed into law in late 2014, Congress directed the formulation and release of the Strategy which was originally expected in 2015. Former Maritime Administrator Chip Jaenichen oversaw several NMS drafts, cobbled together with industry input. He even debuted a Strategy draft at M.E.B.A. Headquarters for industry partners. However, the multi-faceted plan eventually became trapped in limbo at the Office of Management and Budget. It finally disappeared from view with the 2016 Presidential election and change of administration.

After Admiral Mark Buzby took over as the new Maritime Administrator a year ago, he told Congress that the draft strategy was in his "inbox" and he planned to resurrect the moribund plan and "get it across the finish line."

The Department of Transportation, which houses MarAd, was apprised of the GAO report and noted that it concurs with the agency's recommendations to complete the NMS and to set up a timeframe for its issuance. They promised a detailed response within 60 days.

HUGE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF GREAT LAKES/ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

A year-long study of economic impacts of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway navigation system has resulted in the release of a report finding that the system annually supports almost 238,000 jobs and creates \$35 billion in economic activity. Commissioned by Lakes and Seaway stakeholders, the report details the many contributions made by the Great Lakes Seaway system to federal, state/provincial and local economies. The study focused on 2017 and found that maritime commerce in that year supported 237,868 jobs; \$35 billion in economic activity; \$14.2 billion in personal income and local consumption expenditures; and \$6.6 billion in federal, state/provincial and local tax revenue. It also noted that in 2017 alone, 123,172 U.S. and Canadian jobs were dependent on the Soo Locks and that 92,661 jobs were generated by cargo transiting the St. Lawrence Seaway locks.

"This report validates what we've long known – that the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway is crucial to the US economy," says Craig Middlebook, Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.

The "Economic Impacts of Maritime Shipping in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Region" report can be found at <http://greatlakesseaway.org/downloads/2018-glsls-study-en-hr.pdf>

DEVELOPMENTS ON TWIC READER RULE

The Coast Guard's Office of Port and Facility Compliance issued an update on current developments with the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) of interest to all members and transportation workers.

Last week, the President signed the TWIC Accountability Act of 2018 (H.R. 5729) in to law. This prohibits the Coast Guard from implementing the rule requiring electronic inspections of TWICs until after the Department of Homeland Security has submitted an assessment of the TWIC program to Congress. Additionally, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia issued a court order on July 24 delaying the TWIC Reader Final Rule implementation at Certain Dangerous Cargo transfer and non-transfer facilities until further order of the Court, in response to a lawsuit brought by industry groups.

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 & Documents, Vacation Plan Forms). 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, September 3 – **Labor Day** – *Halls Closed*

Tuesday, September 4 – **Boston@1200; CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Seattle (Fife)@1300;**

Wednesday, September 5 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;**

Thursday, September 6 – **L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;**

Friday, September 7 – **Honolulu@1100.**

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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