

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



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FULL FUNDING FOR MSP IN OMNIBUS; TRANSPORT RELIEF IN COVID BILL

Though the drama between the President and Congress hasn't fully played out, transportation labor is looking forward to final agreement on the \$908 billion COVID economic relief package which is attached to the \$1.4 trillion Fiscal Year 2021 omnibus spending bill. However, the President has asked Congress to add additional provisions in the COVID relief bill and has threatened it with a potential veto.

Among other things in the Omnibus, the Maritime Security Program will be funded at the fully authorized amount at \$314,007,780 for the 2021 fiscal year.

The COVID relief bill authorizes \$600 direct payments to individuals, creates additional jobless benefits, reserves over \$80 billion for schools and almost \$70 billion for vaccine development and distribution. The Transportation Trades Department (TTD), which includes the M.E.B.A. and our affiliate Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS) among others, was pleased that \$45 billion of the relief bill will be directed to the transportation industry with much of that money going toward aviation, transit and ferries. Earlier this year, the expiration of the Payroll Support Program (PSP) for airline employees prompted mass layoffs and furloughs. Now, several airlines have announced that the new COVID relief bill will allow them to rehire many of those employees.

Greg Regan, TTD Secretary-Treasurer said, "This economic relief package will provide critical funding for our nation's transportation system and its frontline workers; put emergency money in peoples' pockets through expanded unemployment insurance, direct cash payments, and other support; and ensure our health care system holds up as we mobilize to ensure the coronavirus vaccine reaches all Americans. While these are absolutely essential steps for Congress to take, we must also be clear that the funding provided to support frontline transportation workers, who continue to lay their lives on the line for this country, is a Band-Aid that will only stem the bleeding for a few months. We look forward to working with Congress and the new administration to secure the kind of economic relief that will allow working people, the broader economy, our transportation system, and state and local governments to recover from the ravages of this global pandemic."

TANKER SECURITY FLEET, DEFENSE SPENDING ON HOLD AS VETO STALLS NDAA

The President followed through with a threatened veto of the annual defense bill after expressing displeasure with certain provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that won

broad support from lawmakers. The President has continually cited his opposition to renaming military bases that currently honor Confederate leaders, and the absence of language to remove liability protections for social media companies.

The NDAA outlines Pentagon policy and authorizes \$740 billion in defense spending, and has provisions affecting U.S.-flag shipping. Among other things, it would create a 10-vessel Tanker Security Fleet modeled after the Maritime Security Program, require an audit of federal agencies required to comply with U.S. cargo preference laws, and place further restrictions on Jones Act waiver requests.

The House and Senate each passed the NDAA by veto-proof (more than two-thirds) majorities. Now that the President has batted the bill back down to Congress, lawmakers will abbreviate their holiday break and return to Washington D.C. early next week to again vote on the measure. Should those two-thirds majorities hold, the President's veto would be overridden and the bill would become law with no further changes.

MATSON COMPLETES LATEST FLEET RENEWAL WITH NEW CON-RO DELIVERY

Matson Navigation welcomed the second of two combination container/roll-on, roll-off (Con-Ro) vessels late last week after they took delivery of the new MATSONIA from NASSCO shipyard in San Diego, CA. The newbuild is the second of two Kanaloa-class vessels built by the shipyard for Matson. The company took delivery of the LURLINE late last year.

MATSONIA and LURLINE are each 870 feet long, 114 feet wide (beam), with a deep draft of 38 feet and weighing in at over 50,000 metric tons. The sister ships have an enclosed garage with room for approximately 500 vehicles, plus ample space for rolling stock and breakbulk cargo.

The NASSCO-built vessels join two other Matson containerships that entered service over the last two years – DANIEL K. INOUYE and KAIMANA HILA. The Aloha-class containerships were constructed by Philly Shipyard.

The four new ships are the centerpiece of Matson's nearly \$1 billion investment to modernize its Hawaii service. In addition to a nearly \$930 million investment in its fleet, Matson is also investing more than \$60 million in improvements to its Hawaii hub terminal at Sand Island in Honolulu, in conjunction with the State of Hawaii's Harbors Modernization plan.

Designed and built specifically for the Hawaii trade, all four of the new ships feature state-of-the-art green technology, including fuel-efficient hull design, environmentally safe double hull fuel tanks, Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) compatible engines, and freshwater ballast systems. The more recent Kanaloa Class vessels are equipped with the first Tier 3 dual-fuel engines to be deployed in containerships regularly serving West Coast ports. Tier 3 engines reduce the levels of particulate emissions by 40 percent and nitrogen oxide emissions by 20 percent, as compared to Tier 2 standards. The four new ships are also Matson's fastest vessels, with the ability to operate at or above 23 knots, helping ensure on-time deliveries in Hawaii from Matson's three West Coast terminals in Tacoma, Oakland and Long Beach.

M.E.B.A. permanents aboard the vessel include Chief Engineers Brian Koechley and Tom Pote, and 1st Assistant Engineers Colin Moses and Brendan Linn. Also part of the vessel's crew are 2nd A/E Andrew Goodman, 3rd A/E Bryant Salvesen and 3rd A/E Edward Albrecht.

IMO WANTS TO ROOT OUT CHARTERER CLAUSES HAMPERING CREW CHANGES

International Maritime Organization Secretary-General Kitack Lim blasted “no crew change” clauses that some charterers have inserted into contracts with shipowners, to prevent change-outs while the charterer's cargo is onboard.

The crew change crisis is in its tenth month and hundreds of thousands of seafarers remain onboard ships far beyond the end of their assignments. A similar amount of international seafarers currently “on the beach” are unable to join ships and earn a living because of the desperate situation with crew changes.

In a strong statement, supported by the International Labour Organization (ILO), Lim called upon all charterers to refrain from requesting “no crew change” clauses in charter-parties, and further called upon shipowners and operators to reject them if they are demanded.

“Such clauses exacerbate the mental and physical fatigue among exhausted seafarers, undermine compliance with the provisions of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006) and further threaten the safety of navigation,” Lim said. “The situation continues to constitute a humanitarian crisis that threatens not only seafarers' health and wellbeing but also the safety of navigation and the uninterrupted flow of the global supply chain.”

FURTHER MMC EXTENSIONS ANNOUNCED IN UPDATED COAST GUARD MSIB

To mitigate the impact of the pandemic on mariners, the Coast Guard has updated a Marine Safety Information Bulletin to provide further extensions of Merchant Mariner Credential Endorsements, Medical Certificates and Course Approvals. Change 5 to MSIB 08-20 was issued this week and has been posted in full on the M.E.B.A. website (www.mebaunion.org) in the “Documents & Member Notices” section. Importantly, the updated MSIB does the following:

- Merchant mariner credentials, both national and STCW, and medical certificates that expire between March 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021 are extended. The credentials are extended to the EARLIER of October 31, 2021 or one year from the expiration date of the credential. This reflects the fact that statutory authority to extend credentials is limited to one year.
- In light of the recent closures of Regional Examination Centers to the public, approval to test letters and course approval certificates that expire between March 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021 are extended to October 31, 2021.

If you have questions, please contact the National Maritime Center by using the NMC's online chat system available at <https://www.uscg.mil/nmc>, by emailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil, or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (472-5662).

SAVE OUR SEAS 2.0 ACT SIGNED; NEW LAW TACKLES OCEAN TRASH

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle celebrated the final passage and recent signature into law of the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act (SOS 2.0) that will help battle against the scourge of plastics and other trash infiltrating our oceans.

The new law, which builds upon the original SOS Act implemented in late 2018, will further improve America's ability to clean up waste, advance international cooperation with nations responsible for the majority of trash entering the oceans, and explore innovative ways to manage and reuse plastic waste.

"This is a great day for our oceans, marine ecosystems, and the countless communities they support. Our state is home to more coastline than any other, and Alaskans know that healthy oceans are essential to our economy and way of life," said Congressman Don Young (R-AK).

REGISTRATION FOR ONLINE JANUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS HAS BEGUN

For the regular online January Membership meetings that will be held from January 4-8, the week-long registration period began today (12/24) and continues until December 31st. Notice of the meetings was sent earlier today to members, applicants and retirees with email addresses on file with M.E.B.A. Headquarters. In addition, the notice is posted on the M.E.B.A. website in the "Documents & Member Notices" section. 12 of the 13 meetings will be held online. The Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School will host its meeting in-person (on Tuesday, January 5) in the Newberry Auditorium where appropriate COVID precautions can be taken. Please note that some of the registration contact persons have changed from previous registration periods.

ONLINE JANUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS – (*All times are local*)

(Registration Period is December 24-December 31)

Monday, January 4 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Tuesday, January 5 – CMES@1430 (*CMES Meeting will likely be conducted in-person*); Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, January 6 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, January 7 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, January 8 – 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.