

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



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SUPPORT THE JONES ACT!

Members, applicants and retirees are invited to let Congress know how important the Jones Act is to the nation's economy and national security. A new link will help you easily cobble together and dispatch a message to Congress urging them to stand up for this important statute that helps keep the U.S.-flag fleet afloat.

There are frequent challenges to the tried and true Merchant Marine Act of 1920 by ignorant or unknowledgeable sources who typically recommend paring down, waiving or repealing the Act. Their arguments are mirrored by overseas shipping interests who would love to replace American workers.

The loss of the Jones Act would give the green light and open up our coasts and inland waterways to foreign ships and mariners. While U.S. ships and seafarers are subject to strict Coast Guard licensing and documentation standards that ensure that safe practices are adhered to, their foreign counterparts are not.

You can visit the following link - <http://tinyurl.com/y2czdfcp> - set up by the American Maritime Partnership. It's designed for convenience allowing you to click a few buttons, type a few characters – and your Jones Act letter is complete and emailed to your Congressional delegation. Five minutes of your time can really make a difference.

COAST GUARD RESTATES CYBER POLICY IN WAKE OF ATTEMPTED SHIP HACK

The Coast Guard noted that a recent attempt to compromise cyber security aboard an unidentified U.S.-flag commercial vessel was recognized and averted. But the agency took the opportunity to restate the procedure for mariners to observe in such instances. Coast Guard says a ship captain was emailed a request from a seemingly official individual claiming to represent a port state body (email port@psc.gov.org). Their request for "sensitive information about the vessel, its crew, and its cargo" was rightfully regarded with skepticism from the vessel master and subsequently reported.

Coast Guard reiterates that CG-SP Policy Letter 08-16 titled "Reporting Suspicious Activity and Breaches of Security" outlines the criteria and process for vessels and facilities to report suspicious activity (SA) and breaches of security (BoS) including cyber incidents.

The Coast Guard's National Response Center (NRC) remains the federal government's primary point of contact for notifications of all SAs or BoSs including cyber. For cyber incidents that do not impact

physical security or cause a pollution incident, the Coast Guard allows parties to report the incident to the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center (NCCIC) in lieu of the NRC. The NCCIC can be reached at (888) 282-0870 and may be able to provide technical assistance to the reporting party.

DHS COMMENT PERIOD ON TWIC PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

The Department of Homeland Security has opened up a procedural two-month comment period to help gauge the effectiveness of the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) on enhancing security and mitigating risk on vessels and at maritime facilities. Comments are being accepted through April 8, 2019.

DHS is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department? (2) Will this information be processed and used in a timely manner? (3) Is the estimate of burden accurate? (4) How might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected? and (5) How might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology?

You can submit comments, identified by docket number DHS–2018–0052, at Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. All submissions must include the agency name and docket number DHS–2018–0052. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Scott Randels can be contacted for further info at Scott.Randels@hq.dhs.gov or 202-254-6053.

REP. DeFAZIO WARY OF AIRLINE FOC EXPANSION

At an airline industry luncheon this week, Congressman Peter DeFazio expressed concerns that the flag of convenience model, that has debased international shipping, could become more pervasive within commercial aviation. Rep. DeFazio, the new Chairman of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee worries that an aviation FOC expansion could help stifle U.S. airline industry competitors.

As members know, FOC ships – vessels that are registered in a country other than its ownership nation – have damaged the U.S. maritime industry for years by allowing companies to adhere to less rigid safety regulations and offering substandard wages to their crews.

In the last session of Congress, a House plan to prevent the FOC system from manifesting itself within U.S. aviation was stymied by Senate opponents. Ultimately, Norwegian Air International received approval to operate as an Irish airline without offering any services from Ireland. NAI began using an employment contract with a Singapore agency to field pilots on their planes that are based in Thailand. Wages and working conditions governing those pilots are substandard.

Rep. DeFazio told the industry group, “We have to look at the future of the industry. I don’t want the airline industry to become the cruise line industry. There aren’t any American cruise lines and there is basically no American maritime left either.”

“We see this model coming out of Europe, which is, ‘Let’s go to a country with more permissive labor standards, i.e., Ireland,’ or ‘Let’s operate contract crews out of Asia,’” Rep. DeFazio noted. “What

does this mean for the future of our civilian reserve air fleet? We have to ensure the future of a robust American aviation industry and make sure we're doing it in a way that protects American jobs.”

SCHOOL'S OUT: DENVER TEACHERS STRIKE FOR A FAIR DEAL

5,700 Denver teachers and special service providers went on strike on Monday after the School District failed to rectify a failing compensation system that makes the job a misery and has led to record turnover. 93% of Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA) members approved the strike after 15 months of failed negotiations with Denver Public Schools. The current incentive based pay system is complicated and enigmatic, leaving teachers perplexed at what their pay might be and subsequently providing motivation to find jobs elsewhere. The DCTA noted that “the district has failed to deliver a fair, transparent and professional salary plan that pays all teachers a living wage at the base level and limits unpredictable bonuses that disrupt our students' education.”

DCTA negotiators continued to pound away in marathon talks with Denver Public School officials this week, and close to press time, it was announced that the parties had reached a tentative agreement that would provide raises and help iron out the pay system and get school back in session. Members will consider the agreement and put it to a ratification vote.

BIG RAFFLE ANNOUNCED FOR G&W FUND – GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

The Good & Welfare Committee has launched another 50/50 Raffle to keep the M.E.B.A. G&W fund in ship shape. The raffle is open to anyone who wants to purchase a ticket. The drawing will be held on October 8th and will take place at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School during the regular membership meeting.

5,000 tickets were printed and sent out to the Union halls as well as the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School. They are being sold for \$2 apiece. Anyone purchasing \$50 worth of tickets will be presented with an M.E.B.A. T-shirt. Those who purchase \$100 worth of tickets will earn both a shirt and an M.E.B.A. hat. \$50 and \$100 purchasers will also receive M.E.B.A. pins.

The raffle winner will receive 50% of the proceeds (*as much as \$5,000!!*) with the other half going to the Fund. Ticketholders do not need to be present at the drawing to win. Every ticket that you buy puts another dollar into the Good & Welfare Fund.

M.E.B.A. members are encouraged to support this important cause. The Good & Welfare Fund assists active and retired members and their families in times of crisis. It helps remove some of the sting and burden of unexpected tragedy and lends a hand to those within the M.E.B.A. family. This is a wonderful cause, but we must constantly strengthen the fund to allow additional assistance to members and retirees in times of hardship. The G&W Fund is exempt from Federal Income tax, so consider making a contribution. In addition, you can support the Fund on the M.E.B.A.'s electronic payment portal that is also used to pay dues and service charges as well as contribute to the Political Action Fund. Visit www.mebaunion.org to access the portal.

ICS SEES A FUTURE WITH ZERO CO² FUEL

International Chamber of Shipping Chairman Esben Poulsen predicted that big changes in global shipping will continue beyond the 2020 implementation of the new sulfur standards, as he forecasted that the industry will likely move toward eliminating carbon-intensive fuel.

Speaking before an ICS gathering in London, Poulsson noted that while momentous steps have been made in reducing shipping's environmental footprint, important long-term measures need to be developed to achieve complete industry decarbonization.

“The 2020 global sulfur cap will be the regulatory game changer of the decade with profound implications for the economics of shipping,” he said. “But there are even more profound changes to come. We are rapidly moving into a multi-fuel future to be followed we hope, in the 2030s, by the arrival of commercially viable zero CO₂ fuels suitable for global application.”

ICS has noted that ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals cannot be reached with the continued usage of fossil fuels – but it has to happen assisted by with technological innovations. Poulsson noted that over the next ten years we will “require massive investment in research and development of zero CO₂ emitting propulsion systems and other technologies which don't yet exist in a form that can be readily applied to international shipping, especially in deep sea trades. This will need to be a key component of the IMO strategy when detailed ideas for long term measures are taken forward during 2020.”

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO WITH HQ

Be sure to inform Headquarters if you have changed your contact information. There is an address change form on our website to help expedite the process. It can be found at www.mebaunion.org under the “Members” tab or in the “Documents & Notices” section. Alternatively, you can send your updated information to Doris Fitzgerald at HQ by mail, fax at (202) 638-5369, or e-mail at membership@mebaunion.org Since the M.E.B.A. Plans office in Baltimore and Headquarters databases are NOT linked, you must also forward a signed change of address form to the Plans Office if you wish to update your information with them.

HALLS, OFFICES CLOSED MONDAY FOR PRESIDENTS DAY

As always, the third Monday in February marks the observance of Presidents Day. M.E.B.A. halls and offices will be closed on February 18. The holiday was officially approved in 1968 as “Washington's Birthday” in honor of our first President George Washington (born Feb. 22, 1732). It eventually morphed into “Presidents Day” and became an occasion to also celebrate the birthday of another one of our greatest Presidents – Abraham Lincoln (born Feb. 12, 1809). But on Monday, feel free to also honor the memories of the other two February Presidents - William Henry Harrison (born Feb. 9, 1773) and Ronald Reagan (born Feb. 6, 1911). Happy Presidents Day!

REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Monday, March 4 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;**
Tuesday, March 5 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;**
Wednesday, March 6 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;**
Thursday, March 7 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;**
Friday, March 8 – **Honolulu@1100.**

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