

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AVERTS SHUTDOWN

This week, Congress passed and the President signed into law a "continuing resolution" that would fund federal government operations to avert a government shutdown ahead of Election Day. The temporary, stop-gap funding measure keeps agencies such as the U.S. Coast Guard and the Maritime Administration, among several others, running until December 11th of this year. It is expected that the lame-duck Congress will resume budget negotiations following the November 3rd election.

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 4 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, that expire between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020 are extended. The credentials are extended to the EARLIER of these two dates: June 30, 2021 - or one year from the expiration date of the credential. (The Coast Guard's statutory authority to extend credentials is limited to one year).
- In light of recent closures of Regional Examination Centers to the public, approval to test letters and course approval certificates that expire between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020 are extended to October 1, 2021.
- Medical Certification. The NMC is processing applications for medical certificates within normal timeframes and therefore the guidance on extending medical certificates has not changed.

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).

CMA CGM DEALING WITH RANSOMWARE ATTACK

The CMA CGM Group, parent of NOL/American President Lines and POID, was hit by a cyber-attack last weekend that affected various aspects of its operations. The company said that its servers in China were penetrated by the Ragnar Locker ransomware. Once the breach was discovered, CMA CGM said, “external access to applications was interrupted to prevent the malware from spreading.” The company suspected that data was stolen but didn’t elaborate. Initially, their booking platform was shut down, cargo deliveries were delayed and communication outages slowed business for the first few days after the attack.

The company’s website was offline for several days before an update notice was posted. In a web posting this week, they said that their email system, transmitted files and electronic data interfaces were secure and that maritime and port operations are up and running, including bookings. It was reported that the cyber-attack had slowed up some administrative capabilities in the APL fleet and impacted POID operations, but the company was quickly moving to restore full functionality. An investigation is being conducted and CMA CGM said it would provide regular updates.

M.E.B.A. AFFILIATE CALLING FOR CONGRESSIONAL LIFELINE FOR AIRLINE WORKERS

M.E.B.A. affiliate PASS (Professional Aviation Safety Specialists) warns that thousands of American aviation jobs will be lost as soon as this week without Congressional action to ease the impact of the pandemic on the workforce. PASS, along with other Transportation Trades Department (TTD), AFL-CIO unions (which include the M.E.B.A.), recently sent a letter to top congressional leaders calling on lawmakers to pass an economic relief package to aid essential workers on the frontlines of the pandemic, especially those in the transportation sector.

Earlier this summer, PASS and the aviation unions of TTD urged lawmakers to extend the Payroll Support Program (PSP) for airline employees in the next COVID-19 response legislation. That legislation has stalled. By providing millions of dollars to airlines under the CARES Act, the PSP has kept hundreds of thousands of airlines workers employed by preventing the airlines from any layoffs or furloughs, but it expired today. It was reported that American Airlines and United Airlines had begun the furloughs of thousands of workers earlier today. Both carriers maintain they are prepared to reverse course if a stimulus deal is reached.

In the latest letter to Congressional Leaders, PASS and TTD again asked for Congress to take action to extend the PSP as well as other programs needed to support the broader transportation industry.

“We know that the economic needs are not limited to transportation, and that workers in every other sector are depending on Congress to help them through this crisis,” wrote the unions of TTD. “Lack of immediate Congressional action to meet these needs will ripple throughout our membership, and the effects will be felt across the entire economy.”

“The employees PASS represents at the Federal Aviation Administration and Department of Defense are fortunate to still be working,” said PASS National President Mike Perrone. “But our brothers and sisters across the transportation sector who are working equally hard for the American people during this national emergency are in dire need of assistance and PASS is proud to join the call for action from Congress.”

HOUSE-PASSED BILL CONTAINS JONES ACT ENFORCEMENT FOR OFFSHORE WIND

An energy efficiency bill passed by the House this last week contains an amendment authored by a maritime-friendly legislator that would enact Jones Act requirements for offshore renewable energy production. The “Clean Economy Jobs and Innovation Act” (H.R. 4447) was passed by the House last week in a 220-185 vote. H.R. 4447 encapsulates a series of bills that, among other things, authorizes funding for energy efficiency programs, electric vehicle infrastructure and environmental justice programs.

An amendment with maritime implications was put forward by Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) and incorporated into the bill. Rep. Garamendi’s amendment clarifies that the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, a 1953 law governing offshore mineral and energy development, applies to lease sales for non-fossil fuel energy sources such as wind power, hydrokinetic, or ocean thermal energy conversion. It stipulates that offshore renewable energy production would be subject to Jones Act requirements.

“My commonsense amendment simply clarifies that all existing requirements that govern offshore oil and natural gas extraction also apply to renewables,” said Rep. Garamendi. “This will enable our domestic maritime industry to support the renewable energy industry and provide a critical economic stimulus for our nation.”

“I have been a vocal proponent of the Jones Act during my time on the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation,” he continued. “The Jones Act is the lifeblood for a U.S. maritime trade that supports 650,000 jobs and almost \$100 billion in annual economic impact. Ensuring our nation’s offshore renewable energy investments are governed by the strongest labor protections, environmental requirements, and safety standards is commonsense.”

CIVMARs LAUDED AS MSC OILER SHIFTS HOME PORT AFTER 15-YEAR FORWARD DEPLOYMENT

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS WALTER S. DIEHL shifted its hub port in late September from San Diego to Norfolk completing a 15-year forward deployment supporting the U.S. 7th, 6th, 5th, and 2nd Fleets. The vessel is crewed with 89 civilian mariners - 42 hail from the Hampton Roads, Virginia Area. M.E.B.A. represents the engineers onboard the vessel including Chief Engineer Michael Keefe and 1st A/E Michael Baumann.

DIEHL Captain Andrew Chen noted that since 2005, the vessel traveled 997,495 nautical miles and participated in 389 voyages supporting the U.S. Navy and partner nations. “The accomplishments of the crew are staggering and the ship’s numbers are truly impressive,” he said. “Supporting numerous U.S. and coalition ships, the oiler executed 74 underway replenishments and transferred 20 million gallons of fuel and 1,550 pallets of cargo with high precision.”

Captain Chen called DIEHL’s CivMars ‘merchant mariner heroes’. “As federal critical infrastructure workers, they have performed admirably during our deployment across three-quarters of the world, providing world class combat logistic service despite the restrictions placed on the ship and crew due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.”

CHICAGO HEALTH CARE WORKERS WIN AGREEMENT FOLLOWING STRIKE

Health care workers, including nurses and others at the University of Illinois Medical Center at Chicago won a tentative agreement after 10 days on strike. Some 4,000 members of SEIU Local 73 and 1,300 members of the Illinois Nurses Association (INA) had been out on strike demanding safer conditions for nurses, workers and patients, fair wages, and appropriate staffing ratios. The union was putting the new tentative agreement out to members for a ratification vote this week.

Members of Local 73 won 7% wage increases over the term of the agreement, as well as a minimum wage of \$15 per hour for all its members. The INA won a commitment from management to hire 160 full-time nurses to improve staffing ratios and secured fair wage increases. The Chicago Federation of Labor, under the leadership of President Bob Reiter (IUOE), was heavily involved in supporting the unions throughout the strike.

AFL-CIO's SHULER: UNIONS WERE MEANT FOR THIS MOMENT

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler (IBEW) kicked off the recent Washington State Labor Council's (WSLC's) 2020 Constitutional Convention with a compelling call to action for union members. "In times of crisis, coming together as a labor movement is exactly where we need to be," Shuler said. "This year has felt like an absolute gut punch. One after the other. And we are facing crises on so many different fronts: climate catastrophes, the struggle for racial justice, the COVID-19 pandemic and an economic crisis with historic levels of unemployment...But what gives me hope is seeing how the labor movement comes together in times like these, and I'll venture to say that unions were meant for this moment."

M.E.B.A. ELECTION: ONLY VOTES FROM MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING WILL COUNT

According to our By-Laws, members who are not in good standing by November 15, 2020 are not eligible to vote in the ongoing M.E.B.A. election. Please refer to the M.E.B.A. By-Laws Article Two, Section 2.

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

Monday, October 5 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Tuesday, October 6 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, October 7 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, October 8 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, October 9 – 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 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.