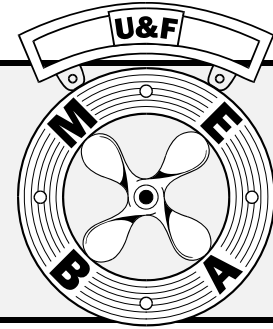

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

OCTOBER 2020



House Passes Renewed COVID-19 Relief Bill, Includes MSP Relief

On October 1st, the House passed a \$2.2 trillion coronavirus stimulus package, which resembles a slimmed down version of the \$3.4 trillion HEROES Act passed earlier in May. As negotiations continue between Congress and the White House to secure a potential relief package before the November 3rd election, the stimulus bill reflects a renewed effort to deliver economic relief as the nation continues to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike the first HEROES Act that passed earlier this year, the renewed legislation authorizes the Maritime Administration (MarAd) to make an additional payment to each of the 60 vessels participating in the Maritime Security Program, using funds from previously appropriated unobligated balances in the Maritime Security Program account. This provision was first included in Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations legislation passed by the House in late July and represents a critical step in the effort to ensure vessel operators and crews remain available to meet the needs of the Department of Defense and help mitigate the impact of the coronavirus on the U.S.-flag industry.

House Passes Legislation to Clarify Jones Act Applies to Offshore Renewable Energy Production

On September 25, the House of Representatives passed a comprehensive clean energy bill, the Clean Economy Jobs and Innovation Act (H.R. 4447), which included an amendment to ensure that the Jones Act applies to all forms of offshore development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The amendment introduced by Rep. Alan Lowenthal (D-CA) and Rep. John Garamendi (D-CA) would clarify 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. Specifically, the amendment will enforce Jones Act requirements by making certain that all existing requirements that govern offshore oil and natural gas extraction also apply to offshore renewable energy production.
