



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

AUGUST 2018

## Farm Bill Conferees to Meet on Food Aid Provisions

The Senate will begin negotiations with the House to work out final details of the 2018 Farm Bill – a five-year package that includes authorization for food aid programs. Conferees will tackle those issues after they return from their August recess. The House and Senate each passed their respective Farm Bill versions in July, with the final details to be worked out through the Conference process prior to expiration of the current authorization on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>. As expected, the Senate version includes several provisions which would negatively impact the U.S. Merchant Marine by decreasing the total amount of food aid available for export. Maritime unions and carriers are actively lobbying both the House and Senate to ensure that the House version prevails.

You can help by visiting the Navy League's "Voice to Congress" page on its website. The site assists you in easily sending a ready-made letter to your lawmakers urging their support for the carriage of Food for Peace cargoes by U.S.-flag ships. Check it out at [www.votervoice.net/NavyLeague/Campaigns/59973/Respond](http://www.votervoice.net/NavyLeague/Campaigns/59973/Respond)

## Urge Your Lawmakers to Honor WWII Merchant Mariners

Bicameral bills honoring the immense contributions of World War II mariners are in need of additional co-sponsors to help propel the legislation over the finish line.

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) have sponsored identical bills, in their respective chambers, collectively honoring World War II merchant mariners with the Congressional Gold Medal. The bills, S. 2127 and H.R. 5879 would authorize a gold medal of appropriate design to be awarded to U.S. WWII merchant mariners on behalf of Congress. The medal would be placed in the American Merchant Marine Museum and duplicates would then be struck and made available to the public.

The Merchant Marine played a heroic and vital role in World War II and the feats and accomplishments of the "Fourth Arm of Defense" are deserving of broader public recognition. The bills' chances for passage would increase dramatically with a larger number of co-sponsors. You can help drum up support by using this link from the Navy League that will let you send a ready-made letter to your Members of Congress urging support for the bills. You can find it online by visiting: [www.votervoice.net/NavyLeague/Campaigns/59995/Respond](http://www.votervoice.net/NavyLeague/Campaigns/59995/Respond)