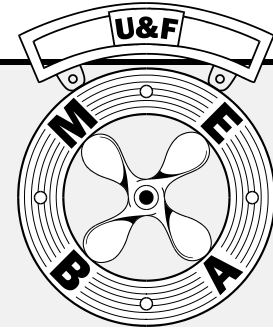


LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

NOVEMBER 2019



House Committee Passes Ex-Im Bank Reauthorization Bill

On October 31st, the House Financial Services Committee voted 30-27 to approve legislation reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank for ten years, making a number of reforms to the Bank and increasing its lending authority from \$135 billion to \$175 billion over a seven-year period. The Ex-Im Bank is a key source of cargo for U.S.-flag shipping and enjoys strong bipartisan support. Importantly, a portion of cargo generated by the Bank is required to be transported aboard U.S. flag vessels while 100% of all cargo financed by the Bank must be carried on U.S. flag vessels for transactions above \$20 million. While the House of Representatives is expected to schedule a vote, the Senate has yet to take any formal action to advance a bill in the upper legislative chamber. The current operations for the Ex-Im Bank are set to expire on November 21st of this year when the current stopgap spending law to fund the federal government expires.

M.E.B.A. Opposes Anti-Union MSP Crewing Proposal Endorsed by Liberty Maritime

Congressional leaders have been working for the past few months to pass annual bipartisan legislation known as the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year '20 (NDAA). As M.E.B.A. members may know, the NDAA is responsible for the Maritime Security Program (MSP). Currently, the pending legislation includes a number of provisions that would protect the long-term viability of the program by extending it for an additional ten years, addressing a budget shortfall to stabilize the program, and authorizing a fleet of 10 U.S.-flag product tankers. However, a recent attempt by Liberty Maritime to introduce a "poison" pill amendment could jeopardize these efforts. The carrier-sponsored amendment would allow an MSP contractor to fully crew a vessel with mariners without any regard of the terms of legally binding collective bargaining agreements. Consequently, this proposal gives the Secretary of Transportation the authority to ban any union from representing any MSP vessel for one year, at his or her discretion, should a union and employer come to disagreement on how to crew a vessel. The egregious proposal has been met with fierce opposition in a letter sent to congressional leaders from the M.E.B.A, MM&P, SUP, MFOW, and the ARA. Furthermore, the M.E.B.A.'s efforts have also been met with solidarity from the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, which represents 32-affiliated transportation labor unions. The M.E.B.A. also followed-up last week with a letter to DOT Secretary Elaine Chao, as well as Maritime Administrator Admiral Buzby, detailing the Union's position for the record. The M.E.B.A. is working tirelessly to defeat this proposal that could jeopardize the long-term viability of the Maritime Security Program.