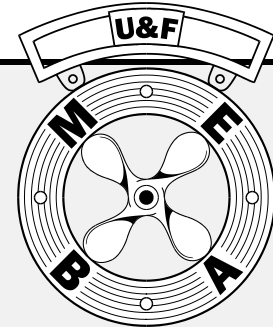


# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*SEPTEMBER 2019*



## **Congress Expected to Finalize Key Legislative Business Before September 30<sup>th</sup> Deadline**

After over a month long congressional recess during August, Congress is expected to pick up where they left off to address a number of important items before September 30<sup>th</sup>, the end of the Fiscal Year 2019. The congressional agenda includes reauthorization for our nation's defense programs, U.S. Coast Guard operations, and fully funding the federal government to avoid a government shutdown. The M.E.B.A. is monitoring these developments and working closely with our political allies from both parties to ensure the progress of its' legislative priorities:

### **National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020**

The House and Senate must reconcile their legislative differences and fully authorize a number of defense programs including a long-term reauthorization of the Maritime Security Program (MSP) through Fiscal Year 2035. The MSP provisions must also address an upcoming funding shortfall that will begin in FY 22' in the absence of congressional action.

### **Pending Coast Guard Bills in the House and Senate**

Earlier this year, the House of Representatives unanimously approved H.R. 3409, which fully reauthorizes the U.S. Coast Guard through Fiscal Year 2021. This legislation requires an audit by the non-partisan Government Accountability Office (GAO) of the federal agencies obligated to comply with cargo preference requirements, provide an analysis of their compliance (or non-compliance), and catalog the percentage of cargo shipped by each agency on U.S. flag vessels. The full Senate is expected to vote on their own version of the Coast Guard bill where it will head to a conference committee, where differences with the House will be negotiated and voted upon, prior to a signature on the President's desk.

### **Congress Must Act to Avoid a Government Shutdown**

On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, President Trump signed a bipartisan budget agreement that raises more than \$320 billion in both domestic and military spending over the next two years. However, congressional leaders must pass and sign into law a number of appropriation bills to fully fund these critical programs in order to avoid a government shutdown before the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.