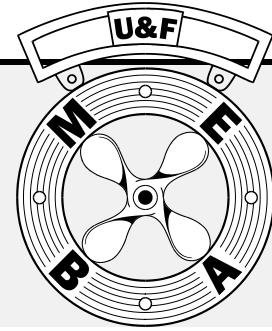


LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2018



MSP Fully Funded in Defense Authorization Bill

The President recently signed the Defense Authorization bill into law laying out defense spending and policy priorities. The funding for defense agencies and programs won't be finalized until after the completion of the appropriations process which provides the money.

Colleagues named the Defense bill after Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) Chairman of the Armed Services Committee who died last week after battling brain cancer. The John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act authorizes \$717 billion for Fiscal Year 2019. Of interest to members, the Maritime Security Program is authorized at its full funding level of \$300 million in FY '19. That breaks down to \$5 million per vessel. M.E.B.A. and U.S. shipping interests will continue working hard to ensure the correct amount is appropriated.

Urge 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. Visit www.votervoice.net/NavyLeague/Campaigns/59995/Respond