

ALL PORTS BULLETIN

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M.E.B.A. Lawsuit to Fight against E.O. that Strips MSC, Army Corps Mariners of Union Rights

The M.E.B.A., alongside the AFL-CIO, MM&P and four other national labor organizations, filed a lawsuit against a sweeping executive order by President Trump that strips collective bargaining rights from many federal agency civilian employees, including those sailing in the Military Sealift Command and Army Corps of Engineers fleets.

Executive Order 14251, issued March 27, claims national security as justification for eliminating long-standing collective bargaining rights and union protections.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., challenges the executive order as unconstitutional and beyond the President's legal authority. It cites six violations, including infringement on First Amendment rights, due process, and existing federal labor law. According to the suit, the Defense Secretary's implementation of the order was arbitrary. While some trade workers at a handful of military depots were spared, most civilian engineers and technical workers lost their union protections overnight. Agencies stopped processing grievances, dues check-offs, and other basic functions spelled out in long-standing collective bargaining agreements (CBAs).

M.E.B.A.'s participation in this legal challenge is consistent with our long tradition of defending workers' rights — both at sea and ashore. Our members who serve in federal roles, like MSC and Army Corps know how critical union representation is to workplace fairness, safety, and accountability. As the case proceeds, M.E.B.A. will continue working with its allies across the labor movement to reverse this unprecedented assault and ensure no union member is left behind.

Continued membership is a lifeline to maintain the collective strength needed to preserve fair treatment and help protect your sailing career during uncertain times. MSC and Army Corps members are being urged to check in with our Norfolk Union hall to verify contact information and speak with our Government Fleet Representatives at our Norfolk hall who are keeping the fleet apprised of the latest developments.

Along with the M.E.B.A., the parties to the complaint are the AFL-CIO, the International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers, the American Federation of Teachers, the AFL-CIO Metal Trades Department, MM&P, and the United Association of Journeymen & Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry, Local 100. It is listed as Case No. 1:25-cv-02445
