

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

*"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"*



## M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

*The Official Union Newsletter – "The Word to the Wise"*  
Number 30 – August 1, 2019



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### **PATRIOT WILL CONTINUE SLNC PAX OPERATIONS FOLLOWING BID AWARD**

Expert M.E.B.A. engineers will continue smooth operations aboard the Patriot-managed shallow-draft chemical tanker SLNC PAX after Schuyler Line Navigation Co. was re-awarded the contract following a DOD/Military Sealift Command bid. MM&P deck officers have served alongside M.E.B.A. onboard the ship since January 2014.

The contract award is for a one-year base period with three one-year option periods along with an 11-month option period.

The vessel was previously known as the BOMAR ERIS before it began its U.S.-flag operation under ship manager Patriot Contract Services in 2014. The vessel supports Defense Logistics Agency-Energy missions for DOD. It primarily transports petroleum and operates in the Far East.

The new MOU covering the vessel has been forwarded to M.E.B.A. halls and offices and is available for review by members and applicants in good standing.

The current engine complement aboard the vessel includes Permanent Chief Engineer Todd Roy, 1<sup>st</sup> A/E Daniel Luglio, 2<sup>nd</sup> A/E Brian McNiece and 3<sup>rd</sup> A/E Michael Trujillo. In addition, John W. Nichols also serves as a Permanent Chief Engineer onboard the SLNC PAX.

### **SHORESIDE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST**

M.E.B.A. members and applicants are continuing to answer the call for one of our newest contracted companies, Commercial Transcontinental Services. CTS is a supply management company based in Hawaii that provides opportunities for short term facilities engineering work. The Founder of CTS, Allen Clark, is a graduate of California Maritime Academy.

The initial rollout was in the Seattle/Portland area, with plans to expand to Oakland and Los Angeles. Since the first dispatch in August of 2018, there have been close to 500 days of covered employment. The Master Service Agreement provides an hourly rate for an 8-hour day Monday thru Friday with Fringe Benefits that provide Pension Credit, Medical and Training contributions as well as Federal Drug Testing and JEC (Hall) funds.

CTS is impressed with the quality and consistency of M.E.B.A. Engineers and these positions are available on the shipping board for any member or applicant.

This is an opportunity to explore shoreside employment while earning Group Time and Pension credit with the M.E.B.A. Contact the Seattle hall for additional information.

### **WSF MEMBERS TO CONSIDER REVISED DUES STRUCTURE**

Members sailing in the Washington State Ferry fleet will vote on a dues equity proposal that was tailored to take WSF member and applicant survey responses into account. Over 200 WSF mariners filled out an online survey, conducted earlier this year between April and May, to help gauge member and applicant opinion on how the Union can maximize its representation and better serve the membership.

The survey was offered to the fleet after a referendum that would have changed their dues structure was narrowly defeated by WSF members last year. Though members failed to back that particular proposal, many indicated a willingness to support a more serviceable dues system if structured differently - understanding that the change was sought to reinforce the Union's ability to provide sustainable future representation. The new proposal has been structured differently and will better align the unit's dues more equitably with similar bargaining units. The referendum will be put before WSF members in good standing in an online vote to take place from September 1-30.

In order to be eligible to participate in the vote, M.E.B.A. members in the WSF unit must have their dues paid in full by midnight on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019. In addition, WSF members are urged to make sure their email address is on file with the M.E.B.A. WSF Rep. Eric Winge will keep members informed and he can be contacted to answer any questions.

### **MARITIME LABOR ALLIANCE: IBU SHOULD GET A FAIR SHAKE IN ALASKA**

The Maritime Labor Alliance has issued a strongly worded letter to Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy urging the State to negotiate with the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific (IBU) in good faith and make efforts to reach a fair contract for mariners in the ferry system. IBU members serving on the Alaska Marine Highway System voted to strike last week after three years of frustrating negotiations exacerbated by the State's lowball offers and continued intransigence. IBU workers have not received wage increases for over 5 years and have been working under interim agreements since 2017.

M.E.B.A. and MM&P also crew the vessels in the AMHS and are showing solidarity with the IBU. The nine vessels in the fleet have not operated for over a week. M.E.B.A., MM&P and the IBU are all members of the MLA which also includes the ARA, ILA and ILWU. A letter signed by each of the MLA union presidents was sent to Governor Dunleavy this week and called for the State to make efforts to reach "a fair and reasonable contract" for the over 400 IBU workers in Alaska's ferry system. The letter says that IBU mariners "have been cast as villains when, in fact, they have been bargaining for three years and have made every reasonable effort to meet the State halfway. Now they are being intimidated and threatened with sanctions for exerting their legal right to strike. The economic well-being of coastal Alaska is being jeopardized by a crisis that has been manufactured for political purposes."

The letter has been posted on the M.E.B.A. website accessed at [www.mebunion.org](http://www.mebunion.org).

## **ILA RE-ELECTS DAGGETT**

Congratulations to Harold Daggett who has been re-elected by members to a third term as President of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA).

President Daggett said he would continue to be the voice and champion of every ILA member. The entire slate of ILA Executive Officers were reelected to new four-year terms. Stephen Knott will return as ILA Secretary-Treasurer; Wilbert Rowell as General Vice President; John D. Baker as General Organizer; Alan Robb and James Paylor as Assistant General Organizer and Benny Holland, Jr., as International Executive Vice President Emeritus. Congratulations all!

## **M.E.B.A. BRINGS TWO NEW AFFILIATES ONBOARD**

The Union has welcomed two new affiliates into the fold, our first new additions under the National M.E.B.A. umbrella since 2016.

Established in 1951, the Professional Peace Officers Association (PPOA) represents Los Angeles County employees of the Sheriff's Department, Department of the Coroner and the District Attorney's Office.

The Association of Public Defender Investigators (APDI) is based in South Pasadena, CA. Its members support attorneys working in the Los Angeles County Public Defenders office.

PPOA and APDI are the National M.E.B.A.'s ninth and tenth affiliates and the first added since the Seattle-based Ferry Agents, Supervisors and Project Administrators Association (FASPAA) became part of the National in 2016. Welcome aboard!

Other M.E.B.A. affiliates include the Association of Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs (ALADS), the California Association of Professional Employees (CAPE) the Los Angeles County Lifeguard Association (LACoLA), the Municipal Construction Inspectors Association (MCIA), the National Federation of Public and Private Employees (NFOPAPE) and the Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS) and Union de Ingenieros Marinos (UIM), our Panamanian affiliate.

## **LABOR FEDERATION SAYS DOL NOMINEE IS "A THREAT TO WORKING PEOPLE"**

President Trump's nomination of Eugene Scalia as the next Secretary of Labor has left the AFL-CIO unenthused. Scalia has spent years serving as a management-side attorney fighting on behalf of corporations at the expense of the little guy. AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka issued a statement saying that Scalia "has fought ergonomics standards, threatened to destroy workers' retirement savings, challenged the expansion of health care and dismissed repetitive injuries as "junk science." His extreme views are in direct conflict with what America deserves from a Secretary of Labor."

Alex Acosta vacated the top DOL post last week after his role in a lenient 2008 plea deal for accused sex trafficker Jeffery Epstein came to light. DOL Deputy Secretary Patrick Pizzella is leading the Department in an Acting capacity until a permanent successor is confirmed by the Senate. Pizzella himself has an extensive anti-labor track record and is expected to get right to work toiling on behalf of business interests and weakening labor rights.

Commenting about Scalia, Trumka noted, “The Secretary of Labor needs to be a true advocate for working people. Even when we disagree, we expect a fair arbiter who listens to workers and respects the deliberative process. The Labor Department’s work is essential to protecting America’s working people and should be subject to less influence from corporate lobbyists, not more. Scalia’s views are dangerously outside the mainstream and leave us no choice but to oppose his nomination.”

### **SENATE COAST GUARD BILL ADVANCES DEVOID OF PROVISIONS HARMING U.S.-BUILD REQUIREMENTS**

Legislation to authorize funds for the U.S. Coast Guard passed a Senate Committee yesterday without two proposed amendments that would have chipped away at the Jones Act and compromised U.S. shipbuilding requirements. At a Senate Commerce Committee markup of the Coast Guard Reauthorization bill, S. 2297, Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) introduced an amendment to weaken the Jones Act by creating an opportunity for foreign flag carriers to apply for a waiver in the event that no such carrier exists to carry a specified product, particularly in case of exporting Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). The Senator said that among 478 vessels capable of LNG carriage, none are U.S.-flagged. He alleged that Puerto Rico and Massachusetts were among those who have imported LNG from other countries instead of purchasing U.S. product. Sen. Lee said his amendment would implement a “narrow exception” to allow applications for a waiver if a Jones Act qualified product carrier is not available.

Most other Senators on the Committee spoke in strong support of the Jones Act against the Lee amendment. Chairman Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) expressed his opposition noting that a waiver process already exists and has been utilized in exceptional cases. He noted that Sen. Lee’s new waiver process empowers a cabinet official to determine waivers thus running an “end-around” on Congress. Sen. Wicker said such a provision would undermine a statute that keeps 650,000 Americans employed with good jobs. Other Committee Members agreed that weakening the Jones Act is terrible policy.

Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA) said the Jones Act is habitually scapegoated for high energy prices. She pointed out that we should strengthen the statute – not weaken it. Sen. Cantwell said that undermining the Jones Act runs counter to our desire for having a strong U.S. Merchant Marine to help fuel our economy and to be available in times of war.

Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-AK), who introduced the Coast Guard bill, said that a recent article in the *Boston Globe* revealed that the situation in Massachusetts is a product of “misguided policies” in the state rather than the fault of the Jones Act. In addition, the Jones Act is regularly blamed as a culprit for high prices in Puerto Rico – an excuse that has been debunked by non-partisan studies.

Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) also opposed the amendment but admitted that his state does need better access to LNG. He noted that some of the LNG tankers sailing today were built in the U.S. but are flagged in other countries. “We don’t need to gut the Jones Act,” he said. Instead we should get these LNG vessels reflagged to the Stars and Stripes and crewed up with Americans.

The amendment was defeated in a 4-22 vote. The Senators who did not stay true to U.S.-flag shipping and voted in favor of the provision to weaken the Jones Act were Senators Mike Lee (R-UT), Cory Gardner (R-CO), Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) and Ted Cruz (R-TX).

Sen. Lee then introduced a second amendment attempting to take business away from U.S. shipyards. That provision would have outsourced the building of Coast Guard vessels to overseas shipyards of

NATO countries. Senators who spoke out passionately against the first amendment broadcasted their concerns with Senator Lee's second amendment. The second Lee amendment failed by the same 4-22 count.

The Coast Guard reauthorization bill was passed by the Committee and will move ahead for a vote on the Senate floor. The House passed its own version of the bill last week. Unlike the House bill, the Senate version has a provision that maintains pay for Coast Guard personnel in the event of any future government shutdown. Among other things, the Senate version does not contain a House provision to audit Government agency compliance with cargo preference requirements, a provision supported by U.S.-flag shipping interests. Differences in the versions will be ironed out in a future conference committee following Senate passage of S. 2297.

### **TANKERS GOING "STEALTH" IN STRAIT OF HORMUZ; U.S. DISCUSSES LOW-KEY ESCORT SYSTEM**

A number of tankers are "going dark" while transiting the troubled Strait of Hormuz in an increasingly popular strategy to avoid unsavory incidents. *Bloomberg* data shows that at least 20 oil tankers powered down their Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) as they navigated between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman this month. In addition, analysts note that tanker traffic is predictably retreating further away from Iranian territorial waters and hugging opposite coasts. Others are completely avoiding the area which has seen a step-up of high-profile attacks and incidents that have ratcheted up tensions between Iran and U.S. allied countries. Many British-flagged tankers are avoiding the area for now and BP has not sailed its vessels through the Strait since the attempted seizure of one of its ships that occurred on July 10<sup>th</sup>. They are instead relying on chartered tankers.

Meanwhile, it appears that the ballyhooed Operation Sentinel, promoted as a U.S. tool to counter Iranian provocation of commercial shipping in the region, will be less extensive than previously believed.

Vice Adm. Michael Gilday, the current Director of the Joint Staff, told Senators this week that the operation relies on regional partners "to bear the lion's share of the burden." At a Senate confirmation hearing this week to consider his nomination as the next Chief of Naval Operations, Vice Adm. Gilday said, "We will escort our ships as they come along, but we won't be there in great numbers...The coalition that we're building in the Arabian Gulf and specifically in the Strait of Hormuz is going to be an 80 or 90 percent coalition effort...A much smaller U.S. effort is primarily focused on providing intelligence support to the rest of the coalition."

### **CONTINUED NEED FOR MEMBER ASSISTANCE REVIEWING COAST GUARD EXAM QUESTIONS**

The National Maritime Center is still seeking participants to help review U.S. Coast Guard examination questions at the three remaining merchant mariner examination working group meetings this year. Examination question reviews are a good opportunity to help the NMC and your fellow mariners make long-term improvements to the examination system. The remaining meetings include:

- Deck working group – September 10-12
- Engine working group – October 22-24
- Deck working group – December 3-5

Examination reviews are currently scheduled to take place at the National Maritime Center in Martinsburg, West Virginia. However, dates and locations may change based on the number of attendees.

If you would like to participate in these or any future session, please follow the application instructions. Once your request is reviewed, NMC will contact you to discuss further details and confirm the session(s) you wish to attend. Continue to check the website for updates. Should you have any questions, please use the e-mail address provided on the Examinations page, or contact the NMC Customer Service Center by using the NMC online chat system, by e-mailing [IASKNMC@uscg.mil](mailto:IASKNMC@uscg.mil), or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

Monday, August 5 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;**

Tuesday, August 6 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;**

Wednesday, August 7 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;**

Thursday, August 8 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;**

Friday, August 9 – **Honolulu@1100.**

-----FINISHED WITH ENGINES-----



*The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and proven track record of readiness, safety, and loyalty in answering America's call to action in times of both peace and war is unrivaled in the world. M.E.B.A. HQ – Phone: (202) 638-5355; [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org). Visit us on Facebook. For publication and related inquiries contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – [marco@mebaunion.org](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org) Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.*