

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



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

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

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### **MLL's HANLEY, AMO's BARRERE TAPPED FOR AOTOS HONORS**

Three new recipients of the Admiral of the Ocean Sea (AOTOS) statuette were announced this week by the United Seamen's Service (USS), including Maersk Line, Ltd. COO Ed Hanley, and AMO President Willie Barrere. The AOTOS awards are essentially lifetime achievement honors for towering maritime industry figures. The United Seamen's Service (USS) sponsors the event which will take place in New York City on October 24, 2025. Vincent J. Marino, CEO of CMC-ITI-CCS, an intermodal logistics service, will also be honored and a Special Recognition plaque will be presented to Ed Morgan in honor of his leadership as President of the USS. Morgan served in that role for more than 20 years before being relieved by new USS President Tony Naccarato.

This will be the 56<sup>th</sup> presentation of the prestigious AOTOS Awards and will take place at the Sheraton New York Times Square Hotel. The three men will be presented with the traditional silver statuette of Christopher Columbus – the first Admiral of the Ocean Sea. At the event, the USS will also honor selected American seafarers who have demonstrated acts of bravery at sea.

### **CASE BILL WOULD OPEN UP JONES ACT TRADE TO FOREIGN ALLIES**

Congressman Ed Case (D-HI-01), a perennial Jones Act opponent, along with Rep. James Moylan (R-Guam) have introduced a measure [H.R.4839] that would open up the U.S. coastwise trade to foreign nations.

The proposed legislation would open the door for vessels acquired from trusted partners such as South Korea and Japan to operate between U.S. ports without the usual Jones Act limitations. At present, such routes are restricted to ships constructed, owned, and crewed by Americans. The measure also seeks to reduce the current 50% import duty on significant ship repairs or upgrades performed in shipyards located in allied nations. In certain circumstances, it would further permit allied operators to deploy foreign-built, foreign-crewed vessels for U.S. coastal service — a practice the Jones Act prohibits.

AFL-CIO's Metal Trades Department put out a strong press release praising the Jones Act for safeguarding American maritime interests and providing good union jobs. They said this bill "threatens to gut those protections — and with them, thousands of livelihoods."

Calling the Merchant Marine Allies Partnership Act “a pink slip for American workers,” they urged people to write to Congress to oppose this legislation. They provided a link to easily accomplish this: <https://tinyurl.com/mmaof1920>

They noted, “The Jones Act is more than an economic policy — it’s a national security lifeline. In times of crisis, we depend on a robust domestic fleet and the skilled men and women who crew and maintain it. Allowing foreign-built vessels to dominate our coastwise trade is a short-term cost-cutting measure with long-term consequences we can’t afford. History informs us, once the work leaves, it won’t come back. Congress must stand with America’s shipyard workers, reject this bill, and keep our maritime industry — and the middle-class, union jobs it supports — anchored here at home.”

### **U.S. OPPOSES IMO SHIP EMISSION PLAN, THREATENS RETALIATION**

The United States will oppose the International Maritime Organization’s “Net-Zero Framework,” a plan designed to cut global greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping. The Administration warned it may take action against countries that back the measure. The framework includes a new fuel standard for ships and a global pricing mechanism for emissions. These measures, set to be formally adopted in October 2025 before entry into force in 2027, would become mandatory for large ocean-going vessels over 5,000 gross tonnage, which IMO says emit 85% of the total CO<sup>2</sup> emissions from international shipping.

In a joint statement, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, Energy Secretary Chris Wright, and Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy declared the Trump administration’s firm rejection of the proposal ahead of an October vote at the United Nations’ maritime agency. The statement added that the U.S. will not accept any policy that raises costs for American citizens, energy producers, shippers, customers, or travelers. “Our fellow IMO members should be on notice that we expect their support against this action, and we will not hesitate to retaliate or explore remedies for our citizens should this endeavor fail,” it stated.

The U.S., one of the IMO’s 176 member states, withdrew from negotiations over the net-zero framework in April and urged other nations to rethink their positions. The framework was initially approved in April by a simple majority vote, with 63 members supporting it, and 16 against. The October decision will require a two-thirds majority among the 108 states that have ratified the relevant legislation.

### **UN SECURITY COUNCIL URGES STRONGER GLOBAL ACTION ON MARITIME THREATS**

The UN Security Council held an open debate on evolving maritime threats on Monday, hearing calls for united global action, stronger national capacities, and responsible technology use to safeguard the seas.

International Maritime Organization chief Arsenio Dominguez said maritime security underpins economic stability and livelihoods, with over 12 billion tons of goods moved in 2024 with just 1.9 million seafarers and despite geopolitical tensions and nearly 150 piracy incidents. He stressed the need for prevention, vigilance, and cooperation to counter piracy, trafficking and cyber risks. Panama Canal Authority head Ricaurte Vásquez Morales highlighted the Canal’s role as a neutral global trade route, citing recent drought-related innovations and plans for cleaner fuel infrastructure.

INTERPOL Secretary General Valdecy Urquiza warned of growing links between crime and terrorism at sea, urging countries to close jurisdictional gaps exploited by criminal networks. “From the Gulf of Guinea and Singapore Straits to the Red Sea and Somali coast, these threats continue to endanger lives and disrupt critical maritime corridors — with far-reaching consequences for regional stability and global supply chains,” he noted. Moreover, a growing crime-terror nexus at sea is emerging, as groups exploit criminal supply chains to move weapons, operatives and illicit goods to finance their activities. “Criminal networks are exploiting every gap between jurisdictions and every weakness in our cooperation,” he underscored. The convergence of threats requires coordinated global action to protect shipping lanes, safeguard seafarers and address the links between criminal and terrorist networks.”

Member States voiced concern over piracy, shadow fleets, attacks on infrastructure, illegal fishing, and environmental risks. Many called for better vessel tracking, capacity building for developing states, responsible use of emerging technologies, and adherence to international law. Speakers emphasized that maritime security, economic resilience, and environmental protection are interlinked, requiring coordinated regional and global responses to keep the world’s trade routes safe.

### **SHADOW FLEET VESSEL ALLEGED TO HAVE DRAGGED ANCHOR TO CUT CABLES**

Finland has formally charged the captain and two senior officers of the Cook Islands-registered oil tanker EAGLE S, accusing them of sabotaging critical undersea telecom cables in the Gulf of Finland. Finnish investigators believe the vessel is part of Russia’s shadow fleet. They say it dragged its anchor on the seabed for about 90 kilometers cutting five submarine cables in the Gulf of Finland in December of 2024 causing almost \$70 million in damages.

Those crew members now face charges of aggravated criminal mischief, interference with communications, and other offenses. They have been barred from leaving Finland since the probe began. All three deny wrongdoing, arguing that Finland lacks jurisdiction because the cables were damaged outside its territorial waters.

The EAGLE S remains impounded as part of the probe, which has intensified scrutiny of Moscow’s shadow fleet — an aging network of tankers that sanctioned states use to skirt international restrictions.

### **MARINERS ARE A LITTLE MORE CHIPPER LATELY**

The 2025 Seafarers Happiness Index, for Quarter 2 published by The Mission to Seafarers, shows a notable rise in crew wellbeing, with the average happiness score climbing to 7.54/10, up from 6.98 in Q1. Improvements were seen across key areas including connectivity, food, training, and wages, suggesting a more supported life at sea.

Crew interactions remain the most positive aspect of onboard life, while better internet access is helping seafarers stay connected with loved ones. 'Being able to video call my family has changed everything,' one respondent shared. Enhanced food quality and onboard fitness options also contributed to the uplift.

However, the latest Index which is entering a decade of reporting, highlights serious safety concerns. Seafarers continue to report preventable accidents such as electrocution, falls, and injuries from

moving objects. Worryingly, some operators are allegedly misusing 'riding squads', also known as technician teams, to bypass Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) certification, placing non-mariner personnel in operational roles for extended periods. Concerns were also raised about the shift to e-learning, with many feeling that online modules prioritize completion over competence. Rising workloads, limited shore leave, and stagnant crew numbers are adding to the pressure.

### **M.E.B.A. BASEBALL/HOCKEY SHIRTS**

Due to popular demand and for a limited time only, customizable M.E.B.A. baseball AND hockey jerseys are now available for order. These iconic M.E.B.A. items can be customized on the back with a stitched name (of reasonable length) and number.

Net proceeds generated will go to the Good & Welfare Fund. Payment can be made electronically through the M.E.B.A. payment portal. All orders must be submitted (and paid for) by Friday, August 29, 2025.

The information and order form are available at each of the Union halls and a pdf copy is also available from the M.E.B.A. website on the homepage.

### **NEXT MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS** *(All times are local)*

Monday, September 8 – **Boston@1200**. Seattle (Fife)**@1300**.

Tuesday, September 9 – **CMES@1430**; **Charleston@1400**; **Houston@1315**; **Oakland@1230**.

Wednesday, September 10 – **Jacksonville@1300**; **New Orleans@1315**; **Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting)** – Register by emailing [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org)

Thursday, September 11 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230**; **NY/NJ@1300**; **Norfolk@1300**; **Tampa@1300**.

Friday, September 12 – **Honolulu@1100**

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***M.E.B.A. does not tolerate assault, or harassment of any kind.  
If you see something, say something – The M.E.B.A. Emergency Hotline  
can be reached at 1-888-519-0018.***

*The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated 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). Website: [www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org) For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) 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. The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School can be contacted at (410) 822-9600 or [www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org). M.E.B.A. Plans is at (410) 547-9111 or [www.mebaplans.org](http://www.mebaplans.org)*