

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 32 – August 6, 2026



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WHITE HOUSE SET TO EXTEND JONES ACT WAIVER

The White House is set to further extend the ongoing Jones Act waiver to allow foreign-flag interests to continue taking American shipping jobs under the guise of saving money at the gas pumps. The current blanket Jones Act waiver has been in effect for 141 days as of today - a record. This overly-broad waiver permits foreign-flagged ships to move oil, liquefied natural gas, fertilizer, coal, and over 600 other products between U.S. ports, a privilege that should be reserved for Americans, not foreign interests who have happily swooped in to take over our jobs. Reports indicate the Administration is poised to announce yet another extension of the waiver as early as Monday, doubling down on a policy that continues to undercut the U.S.-flag fleet and American maritime jobs. Officials have not disclosed how long the forthcoming extension will remain in effect.

A recent Navigistics study concluded that a Jones Act waiver reduces the national average gasoline price by just \$0.0027 per gallon. That's less than a third of a penny. Meanwhile, the Jones Act supports a strong U.S.-flag fleet, sustains hundreds of thousands of family-supporting maritime jobs, and is vital to national security by guaranteeing the U.S. military can rely on American vessels and skilled mariners in times of conflict and crises.

The latest news continues to raise serious questions about the Administration's commitment to rebuilding America's maritime strength. The waivers stand in stark contrast to President Trump's promises to restore American shipbuilding, strengthen the U.S. Merchant Marine, and put American workers first. While the Administration has championed new shipbuilding initiatives and called for revitalizing the maritime sector, allowing foreign-flag ships to continue performing work reserved for U.S.-flag vessels undermines those very objectives. America cannot rebuild its merchant fleet while simultaneously waiving away the laws designed to sustain it. Repeatedly suspending those protections sends the opposite message: that foreign shipping can replace American mariners and operators whenever it is politically convenient.

Every additional waiver deprives U.S.-flag operators of cargo, weakens the economic foundation needed to sustain American crews, discourages investment in the domestic fleet, and further erodes the maritime industrial base that military leaders have repeatedly said is essential to national security.

The Jones Act waiver is handing foreign shipping companies exactly what they want: American cargo, bigger profits, and a further competitive advantage built on the backs of U.S. mariners and the domestic maritime industry.

PwC STUDY: EXTENDED WAIVER WILL STIFLE INVESTMENT IN AMERICAN MARITIME

An economic analysis prepared by PwC US Tax LLP, commissioned by the Transportation Institute, found that a long-term waiver of the Jones Act would have far-reaching consequences for the U.S. economy, weakening the nation's tax base, eliminating American jobs, and eroding critical industrial capacity. The report finds that under a sustained waiver scenario, the U.S. economy could see significant exposure across four key areas:

- Up to \$1.8 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenue at risk annually
- Up to 133,700 total U.S. jobs exposed, representing up to \$12.2 billion in annual labor income
- Up to \$26.5 billion in domestic shipbuilding demand at risk over ten years
- Up to \$2.6 billion in annual maritime capital investment at risk

“Behind every number in this report is an American worker, a family, and a community that depends on a strong U.S. maritime industry,” said Sara Fuentes, President of the Transportation Institute. “Every extension of the waiver has sent uncertainty and anxiety among Americans who build ships, move cargo, and keep our supply chains running. We hope PwC’s estimates provide the Trump Administration and Congress with a better picture of how another extension of this Jones Act waiver would weaken America, not strengthen it.”

The study, which draws on public data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and U.S. Maritime Administration, also notes that a long-term waiver could carry implications for national security and military sealift readiness, given the role commercial mariners, U.S.-flag vessels, and shipyards play in supporting defense logistics. [The full report can be viewed here.](#)

TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH OSG

A late breakthrough in contract bargaining with OSG last week has led to a tentative agreement with the company that will be considered by members at next month's membership meetings. The Union has been at the table with OSG since March working on a successor agreement to the contract that has since expired (June 30).

M.E.B.A. serves on 13 OSG vessels including three ships in the Tanker Security Program. The company's initial bargaining position led to thorny negotiations but the Union continued to bargain in good faith in an effort to best preserve membership job security, wages, benefits and other conditions of employment.

Late on Friday, July 31st, the parties finally made acceptable progress and negotiators are currently polishing off a tentative agreement that can be presented to the membership for a ratification vote at the September membership meetings.

The M.E.B.A. negotiating team, supplemented by rank-and file input and assistance, was led by Gulf Coast V.P. Adam Smith and Tampa Branch Agent Nicole Greenway.

FOOD FOR PEACE SUPPORT IN NOLA

A ceremonial sendoff at the Port of New Orleans this week highlighted the revival of the Food for Peace program and the important partnership between American agriculture and the U.S. Merchant Marine.

Representatives from the maritime industry, agriculture, organized labor, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the World Food Program gathered as the U.S.-flag vessel LIBERTY GRACE prepared to transport a humanitarian cargo destined for Kenya. The ship loaded more than 28,000 metric tons of Louisiana rice in New Orleans and was adding a shipment of U.S.-grown wheat in Houston before beginning its overseas voyage. The cargo is expected to provide food assistance to more than one million people in Kenya, where millions continue to face severe food insecurity.

The event also recognized the return of Food for Peace to USDA administration, restoring a program that for decades has linked American farmers, ports, and merchant mariners with humanitarian relief efforts around the globe. Organizers noted that every shipment supports not only vulnerable populations overseas, but also U.S. agriculture, port workers, longshore labor, and American-flag shipping.

Administration of the Food for Peace program — previously managed by the U.S. Agency for International Development — shifted to the State Department in 2025 following the DOGE dismantling of USAID and the layoff of most of its staff. Seemingly on its last legs, the program was transferred to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), with M.E.B.A. support, through an interagency agreement with the State Department and the Office of Management and Budget. Earlier this year, the USDA made its first major purchase to provide commodities to developing nations since Food for Peace was moved out of the USAID.

HAPPINESS REPORT: MARINERS RESILIENT DESPITE PRESSURES AT SEA

The latest Seafarers Happiness Index for the second quarter of 2026 highlights a maritime workforce that continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience despite growing operational and geopolitical challenges. According to the report, seafarers remain proud of their profession and continue to draw strength from the camaraderie and teamwork found aboard ship. However, ongoing global conflicts and supply chain disruptions have made longer voyages, rerouted vessels, communications blackouts in high-risk areas, and increased uncertainty a routine part of life at sea.

These added pressures have intensified longstanding concerns over excessive workloads and fatigue. Many seafarers reported that rest-hour requirements are too often treated as a paperwork exercise to satisfy regulators rather than as a meaningful safeguard for crew well-being. Despite these challenges, the report emphasizes that positive working environments remain achievable. Crews consistently cited supportive relationships with fellow mariners as the greatest contributor to their well-being. Companies that invest in reliable internet access, quality food, and programs that support families ashore also reported significantly higher levels of crew morale.

The report concludes that while the resilience of the world's seafarers remains one of the industry's greatest strengths, it should not be viewed as an unlimited resource. To retain experienced mariners and attract the next generation, the report urges shipping companies to go beyond minimum

regulatory requirements and make meaningful investments in the welfare and quality of life of their crews.

CMES HAS MORE ROOM IN UPCOMING COURSES

The Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School announced that it has additional space available in the following August and September courses:

- Advanced Stability - August 24–28
- Tankerman DL - August 31–September 4
- Advanced Meteorology - September 14 – 18
- Anti-Terrorism Officer Level 2 - September 14–18
- Advanced Shiphandling - September 21–October 2

Applications can be sent via the CMES website (www.mebaschool.org) or emailed to applications@mebaschool.org

NATIONAL COAST GUARD MUSEUM BEING BUILT IN NEW LONDON, CT

The U.S. Coast Guard announced that the National Coast Guard Museum – the first national museum dedicated to preserving and sharing the history, heritage, and enduring missions of the Coast Guard – will open to the public during the week of Aug. 2, 2027, culminating with the Coast Guard’s birthday on Aug. 4. Currently under construction along the Thames River waterfront in New London, Connecticut, the 80,000-square-foot museum will feature five public decks with three exhibit floors, five thematic experience wings, a rotating gallery for special exhibitions, educational classrooms, and event space. Designed to immerse visitors in the Coast Guard experience, the museum will combine state-of-the-art interactive exhibits with breathtaking views of the waterfront.

Visitors will explore more than 5,000 historic images, 600 artifacts, interactive exhibits and hands-on exhibits that bring to life the Coast Guard’s missions for all ages. Educational programming in STEM, leadership, civics, and maritime history will extend the museum's reach to classrooms and communities across the country. Among the museum’s signature experiences will be a suspended MH-60T Jayhawk helicopter, complete with a life-sized aircrew modeled after an active-duty crew from Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, North Carolina. Visitors will also encounter some of the service’s most treasured artifacts, including the Medal of Honor awarded to Signalman 1st Class Douglas Munro, the Coast Guard's only Medal of Honor recipient, whose extraordinary heroism during the Battle of Guadalcanal remains one of the defining acts of valor in Coast Guard history.

“This will be far more than a building of artifacts; it will illuminate the hard-earned lessons of the sea,” said Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Kevin Lunday. “By bridging our rich history with the challenges of tomorrow, we are creating a dynamic foundation to inspire the next generation of leaders ready to answer our nation’s call.”

CUSTOMIZED M.E.B.A. FOOTBALL & BASEBALL JERSEYS

For the first time, customizable M.E.B.A. football jerseys are available for order. This is at least the third M.E.B.A. sports shirt the Union has made available following hockey and baseball jerseys. (What’s next? Bowling shirts? Soccer? Cycling? How about Curling or Cornhole?). ***The Union will***

accept orders for the football jersey until August 28, 2026 and we are giving members another chance to order the M.E.B.A. baseball jerseys during this time.

The jerseys can be customized on the back with a stitched name (of reasonable length) and number. Net proceeds generated go to the Good & Welfare Fund. All orders must be submitted (and paid for) by Friday, August 28, 2026. 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)*

Friday, August 7 – Honolulu@1100

Monday, September 7 – *Labor Day – Halls Closed*

Tuesday, September 8 – Boston@1200; CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Portland, Maine@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

Wednesday, September 9 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org

Thursday, September 10 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, September 11 – 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. Website: 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. 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. M.E.B.A. Plans is at (410) 547-9111 or www.mebaplans.org