

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"
M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES
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M.E.B.A. CONNECTS WITH LABOR ALLIES AT AFL-CIO CONVENTION; SHULER, REDMOND, REXHA RE-ELECTED

M.E.B.A. representatives joined thousands of labor activists, union officers, and delegates in Minneapolis this week for the 30th AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention, where delegates from across the labor movement gathered to discuss organizing, collective bargaining, worker protections, and political priorities for the years ahead. The convention brought together affiliated unions representing more than 12 million working people from a wide range of industries. Throughout the event, labor leaders examined strategies to strengthen worker power, expand organizing efforts, and address challenges facing working families and union members nationwide.

During convention week, M.E.B.A. officials also participated in meetings of both the Maritime Trades Department (MTD) and Transportation Trades Department (TTD). These gatherings provided an opportunity for labor leaders representing maritime, transportation, and related industries to discuss legislative priorities, workforce development initiatives, national security concerns, and policies affecting transportation workers throughout the country.

The M.E.B.A. maintained a presence in the convention exhibit hall, where M.E.B.A. staffers handed out M.E.B.A. swag and spoke with attendees about the critical role U.S.-flag shipping and American mariners play in supporting the nation's economy, supply chains, and national defense. The Union also highlighted the importance of programs that sustain the U.S. Merchant Marine and preserve family-supporting maritime careers. The Convention underscored the value of solidarity across industries as unions continue working together to advance policies that strengthen America's workforce and protect good-paying union jobs.

On Sunday, Convention delegates re-elected Liz Shuler and Fred Redmond to continue to lead the AFL-CIO as President and Secretary-Treasurer, respectively. During their time in office, they grew the federation from 57 to 65 affiliated unions, including the affiliation of the 2 million service and care workers of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and supported new organizing to bring the collective membership of the federation to 15 million workers and growing.

"Serving as president of the AFL-CIO has been the honor of a lifetime, and I am deeply moved to be reelected for a second term," said Shuler. "My union story is like so many others, growing up in a

working-class family that scraped to get by from paycheck to paycheck until our lives were changed by an IBEW apprenticeship. Our family lived the union difference. Financial stability overnight, a career with skill and dignity for my dad, and a passion for organizing — that turned into a lifelong mission — for me. I am extraordinarily grateful for the trust that this movement has placed in me, and I will continue to lead our federation in delivering that union difference and changing lives for working families across this country just like mine.”

They announced big plans for their second full-term together including their goal of bringing at least 2 million more workers into unions by 2032. They also pledged to coordinate across the movement to challenge union-busting corporations; drive multi-union, multi-sector organizing campaigns; maximize resources and capacity; and leverage labor’s power as a movement.

At the Minneapolis Convention, Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha was reaffirmed to the AFL-CIO Executive Council. His original election at the 2022 AFL-CIO Convention in Philadelphia marked a historic milestone, as it was the first time in M.E.B.A.’s history that the Union secured a seat on the Executive Council — an important achievement for the membership and the Union. Rex will continue to serve as one of the 55 Vice Presidents for the next four years, along with Shuler and Redmond, on the Council that sets Federation policies and goals. Secretary-Treasurer Rexha also addressed attendees at the Convention and promoted the membership during his participation in a panel discussion concerning “Fair Trade & Good Jobs in the Shipbuilding & Maritime Industries.”

WE NEED TO KEEP UP THE FIGHT FOR THE JONES ACT

The U.S. shipping industry continues the fight to save the Jones Act, a critical statute for American-flag shipping that is being sidelined by the current administration. The decision to prematurely extend the Jones Act waiver to a total of 150 days that allows foreign interests to steal American shipping jobs while not saving Americans any money at the gas pump flies in the face of the President’s announced goal to revitalize U.S.-flag shipping. The 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 gleefully swooped in to take over U.S. jobs. Maritime leaders argue that broad waivers discourage investment in American vessels, weaken the business case for maintaining U.S.-flag operations, erode shipyard demand and send the wrong signal to mariners considering careers at sea. Policymakers are urged to return to the longstanding practice of narrowly tailored, case-by-case waivers rather than relying on an overly expansive exemption.

We need you to keep taking action to defend your livelihood, your family and America’s maritime future. Please tell your Senators and Representative that you, their constituent, support the Jones Act, and urge them to stand up for the 650,000 men and women of American maritime. Mariners can express their disgust with the waiver by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/freetheja> The link will bring you to a customizable letter that will allow you to let your Member of Congress know that it is not acceptable to give away the U.S.-flag fleet to foreign interests. Make sure you “Enable OneClick Echo” which means your Senators and Representative will get a follow-up email from you after 72-hours.

IMO DISMAY OVER MARINER DEATHS ON PALAU TANKER

The Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) expressed deep sadness over the attack on the Palau-flagged chemical/oil products tanker MT SETTEBELLO off the coast of Oman that resulted in the deaths of three mariners.

U.S. authorities said the vessel was transporting Iranian oil, and American forces launched a targeted action at the ship when it did not comply with issued directives. The strike occurred amid heightened tensions in the region. On April 13, the United States initiated efforts to restrict maritime traffic linked to Iran after Tehran sharply limited commercial shipping movements through the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical chokepoints for energy exports.

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez said, "I strongly condemn any act from any party that endangers the lives of seafarers and the safety of international shipping. This is simply unacceptable. My thoughts are with the families of the three seafarers who lost their lives and with all those awaiting news of the crewmembers."

The Secretary-General recalled the conclusions of the IMO Council at its extraordinary session, which underscored the need to protect seafarers, civilian shipping and the freedom of navigation at all times. "All actions affecting international shipping must fully respect international law and the safety of life at sea. The protection of seafarers is a shared responsibility that must remain paramount," he said.

IMO has confirmed 44 attacks on international shipping in and around the Strait of Hormuz, with 14 seafarer fatalities since February 28, 2026.

SAIL4TH SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR HISTORIC JULY CELEBRATIONS IN NYC

The upcoming Sail4th celebration celebrating America's 250th birthday is recruiting hundreds of volunteers to help support its upcoming maritime celebrations in New York City from July 4-8. Activities include tall ship visits and free public tours across Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Staten Island. Among the volunteer opportunities available are **Tall Ship Tour Support Volunteers**, who will assist with visitor check-in, line management, wayfinding, and answering basic questions during public tours scheduled for July 5-7. Organizers describe the role as a great opportunity to participate in the festivities while helping ensure a positive experience for the thousands of visitors expected to attend. Many M.E.B.A. members have already pledged their support as volunteers for the events.

Sail4th is also seeking **Liaison Officer (LNO) Volunteers** to work directly with visiting vessel crews from July 4-8. LNOs serve as a primary point of contact between the ships and Sail4th operations and are stationed aboard participating vessels throughout the event. In addition to volunteer positions, Sail4th is hiring paid Dock Masters for those interested in employment opportunities during the celebrations.

Individuals interested in volunteering can register online at <https://pointapp.org/orgs/9953> or email Volunteers@Sail4th.org for additional information. More details about the event can be found at <https://sail4th.org>

CUSTOMIZED M.E.B.A. BASEBALL JERSEYS

Due to popular demand and for a limited time only, customizable M.E.B.A. baseball jerseys are available for order. This iconic M.E.B.A. item 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, June 26, 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.

FOURTH ARM OF DEFENSE CELEBRATES 251

While the country gets ready to celebrate 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Fourth Arm of Defense is one year older.

On Friday, June 12, the U.S. Merchant Marine turns 251 years old. It hearkens back to the struggle of the 13 colonies to win their independence from Great Britain. Without a strong Navy, the colonies relied on privately-owned commercial ships and their crews to serve as privateers. The Battle of the Margarettta was a small but significant sea battle at the start of the American Revolution. It took place on June 11–12, 1775, near what is now Machias, Maine. After local patriots seized a British supply ship, they pursued the armed British schooner HMS MARGARETTA. Led by local militia captain Jeremiah O'Brien, the Americans boarded and captured the vessel after a fierce fight. The battle demonstrated that American merchant seamen could play a direct role in defending the colonies and supporting the revolutionary cause. Throughout the Revolutionary War, merchant mariners carried supplies, served as privateers, and transported troops and cargo, making them an essential component of the war effort.

In the World War II era, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt referred to the Merchant Marine as the “Fourth Arm of Defense,” the U.S. had the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps as distinct services. The Air Corps/Army Air Forces operated as part of the Army and was the military aviation service. Calling the U.S. Merchant Marine the “fourth arm” placed it alongside the fighting services as an essential element of national defense because it provides the transportation network needed to support the armed forces in both peace and war.

HONOLULU HALL HOLIDAY HONORED THE WARRIOR KING TODAY

M.E.B.A.'s Honolulu Union hall was closed today to honor the greatest Hawaiian king. King Kamehameha I Day honors the chief of the Big Island district who, through conquest, united the eight major islands of Hawaii under his rule in the early 1800s. Legend says that Kamehameha was able to roll over the 7,000 pound volcanic Naha Stone when he was 14 years old, thus revealing that he would be the chosen one to unify Hawaii. A gifted surfer, he was said to be 7 feet tall and weigh over 300 pounds.

Kamehameha became chief of the Big Island district in 1791 after vanquishing his island enemies in a series of bloody civil wars. His cause was aided in part by a timely eruption of Mt. Kilauea which covered a third of the enemy's forces in lava. This event was considered a sign that the fire goddess Pele favored him. As the Big Island ruler, Kamehameha, which translates to "The Lonely One," led his Kipuupuu warriors on a systematic conquest of the Hawaiian Islands which fell one by one to his war machine. His renowned battle cry “Imua!” which means “Go forth!” is a shortened version of his extended battle call, "Imua e na pokii a inu I ka wai awaawa aohe hope e hoi mai ai" which is “Go forth my young brothers and drink of the bitter waters of battle for there is no turning back until we are victorious!”

However, his grand-scale designs to swallow up the island of Kauai were repeatedly thwarted which temporarily stifled his plans for domination. But in 1810, in the face of a massive invasion and certain defeat, the king of Kauai came groveling to Kamehameha and pledged his loyalty. This triggered the

eight major islands of Hawaii to finally unite under one ruler – King Kamehameha I. Dwayne Johnson (The Rock) will supposedly portray the great king in an upcoming Robert Zemeckis film called “The King,” which has not yet begun production. Kamehameha was a wise and popular peacetime king who adopted a legal system and outlawed human sacrifice. He had as many as 30 wives, but his favorite was Ka'ahumanu who later served as Queen Regent and who championed the rights of Hawaiian women and engineered a ban of the hula dance that was later overturned. Kamehameha helped rebuild battle-torn Hawaii while promoting trade and fostering the agriculture of what would become our 50th state. He continued to serve as king, ruling in peace until his death on June 11, 1819. His burial site is still a mystery today but his legacy looms large. He was succeeded by his firstborn son Liholiho (King Kamehameha II), one of his 35 children. All hail Kamehameha the Great!

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

Friday, June 12 – Honolulu@1100

Monday, July 6 – **Bloody Thursday (Observed) - West Coast Halls Closed - Boston@1200.**

Tuesday, July 7 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Portland, Maine@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

Wednesday, July 8 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mehq@mebaunion.org

Thursday, July 9 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, July 10 – 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; mehq@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