

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



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NEW BILL TO FAVOR SHIPS CARRYING U.S. EXPORTS

Three California Congressmen have introduced a bill to give priority access to vessels carrying U.S. exports allowing them to help bypass supply chain delays.

Congressmen John Garamendi (D-CA-03), Jim Costa (D-CA-16), and Mike Thompson (D-CA-05) said their "American Port Access Privileges Act" (H.R.8243) would put U.S. exporters at the front of the line at U.S. ports. They characterized the new bill as a follow-up to the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2022, a Garamendi-sponsored bill that aims to ease shipping backlogs and fix supply chains, that was recently signed into law.

Rep. Garamendi noted, "Foreign exporters' access to the American market and our consumers is a privilege, not a right. Cargo ships looking to offload foreign-made products and profit off West Coast ports must provide opportunities for American exports in return. Our legislation would put American exports at the front of the line at our ports to support American businesses and workers. Congress must restore fairness at our ports for American exporters to help reduce the United States' longstanding trade imbalance with countries like China."

Among other things, the bill would codify current preferences for military, Jones Act, and other US-flagged vessels in place at many major American ports; and establish a secondary berthing preference for ocean-going commercial vessels servicing multiple ports in the U.S. or with significant cargo bookings of American exports. They said that this new preferential berthing would reward ocean carriers that serve both importers and American exporters by moving those vessels to the front of the queue for unloading and loading.

MARITIME LABOR MEETS WITH HOUSE T&I CHAIRMAN

On Monday, representatives of maritime labor, including the M.E.B.A., the International Longshoremen Association, and the SIU met with Rep. Peter DeFazio in recognition and gratitude for his 36 years of public service in Congress as a champion of both the maritime industry and organized labor.

During his tenure in Congress, Rep. DeFazio has been an ardent supporter of the Jones Act, ensuring full funding for the Maritime Security Program, and protecting our nation's cargo preference laws. Rep. DeFazio, Chairman of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee,

has also championed a number of important initiatives like the Port Infrastructure Development Program as well as ensuring that funds for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund remain solvent and utilized to prioritize dredging at American ports and harbors in support of safety and jobs.

The meeting also focused on Congressman DeFazio's remaining legislative priorities as his time to Congress comes to a close including efforts to address sexual assault and harassment at sea and promoting mariner job growth in the offshore wind industry. Other represented unions included IBT, UA, and the IUOE. M.E.B.A was represented by Gulf Coast Vice President Adam Smith and Director of Government Affairs Erick Siahhaan.

MARAD ANNOUNCES PRIORITY FINANCING FOR OFFSHORE WIND NEWBUILDS

The Maritime Administration is designating U.S.-built offshore wind vessels as "Vessels of National Interest" to help jumpstart more offshore wind vessel construction. The designation will make such vessels eligible for financial support through the Title XI Federal Ship Financing Program (Title XI) by prioritizing their applications.

The Title XI program assists the domestic shipbuilding industry by providing support for U.S. shipyards to modernize their facilities, build and retrofit vessels, and to assist U.S. shipowners cost-effectively purchasing new domestically produced vessels. It can provide a full faith and credit loan at longer terms and a lower interest rate than traditional private loans. To date, Title XI has provided \$9.3 billion in loan guarantees.

M.E.B.A. continues to work with our industry and government partners to explore opportunities in this emergent industry.

"We're excited that some American shipyards have already secured contracts to build vessels to service offshore wind developments," said Maritime Administrator Ann Phillips. "By growing this industry, we further support essential offshore wind installations, and continue to add jobs and strengthen our important domestic industrial base, including our shipyards and shipbuilding industry."

NEW MSC ESB CHRISTENED AT NASSCO

The USNS JOHN L. CANLEY, the Military Sealift Command's fourth Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) vessel, was christened on Sunday at San Diego's NASSCO Shipyard.

The 784-foot ship honors Marine Gunnery Sgt. John L. Canley who rescued more than 20 fellow Marines under enemy fire in Vietnam during the Battle of Huế City in 1968. In addition to the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest honor, Canley also receive the Bronze Star with Combat "V," and the Purple Heart.

ESB ships are highly flexible platforms designed to support multiple maritime-based missions, including Air Mine Counter Measures (AMCM), Special Operations Forces (SOF), and limited crisis response. Acting as a mobile sea base, this ship has a 52,000 square-foot flight deck to support MH-53, MH-60, MV-22 tilt-rotor, and H1 aircraft operations.

The USNS ROBERT E. SIMANEK, the fifth ship in the ESB program, is currently under construction. The first three ships in the ESB program – USS LEWIS B. PULLER, USS HERSHEL “WOODY” WILLIAMS, and USS MIGUEL KEITH – have already been delivered. Civilian Mariners aboard each of the ESBs are represented by the M.E.B.A., MM&P and SIU.

MTD: MARYLAND PORT’S DOYLE CREDITS JONES ACT COMPANIES OVER FREED VESSEL

The Maritime Trades Department recently spotlighted M.E.B.A. member William Doyle, who serves as Executive Director of the Maryland Port Administration. The MTD is a coalition of port councils and unions, including the M.E.B.A., that battles on behalf of U.S.-flag shipping. Doyle recently spoke at the MTD Convention earlier this month. MTD noted:

“Delegates to the MTD Convention in Philadelphia received a special presentation instead of a speech from the Executive Director of the Maryland Port Administration. William Doyle chose to explain how he worked with U.S.-flag maritime companies and governmental agencies to extricate a foreign-flag containership that ran aground in the Chesapeake Bay in March.

Doyle, who began his maritime career as a member of the MTD-affiliated Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association (M.E.B.A.), told the delegates he wanted to show that Jones Act companies could handle the job when he received word on the evening of March 13 that the EVER FORWARD was stuck in the bay after departing Baltimore.

Speaking [*at the MTD Convention in Philadelphia*] on June 10], Doyle decided he wanted his agency to control the message surrounding the grounding and “we’ve got to go all in on a Jones Act operations.” Messaging would include the fact no one was killed or injured, no environmental damage occurred, no oil spilled into the bay and commerce still could move freely.

In less than one day, foreign dredging interests were telling the media that “the U.S. can’t do it” and their vessels and crews would be needed. But the Maryland Port Administration stayed on message, “U.S. dredgers, U.S. workers, U.S. companies – we’ve got this.”

Two Jones Act dredging companies quickly provided equipment, including one already in the Chesapeake Bay on an Army Corps of Engineers job. Dredging began one week after the incident, with the materials being recycled to rebuild an island in the bay.

Doyle and his team realized the EVER FORWARD had to be lightened in order to refloat. Crews removed 500 containers by April 17 when conditions including a high tide would be excellent to free the vessel. After all the dredging and container removals and with six tugboats working, the ship floated free 15 minutes before high tide.

Doyle credited his lifetime of experience in knowing the U.S.-flag maritime industry could handle the emergency. He thanked the maritime unions, shipping companies, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Army Corps of Engineers and numerous state and local agencies for allowing him to have “the confidence in the U.S. merchant marine to get that done. It worked out.”

Before being appointed to oversee the Maryland Port Administration in 2020, Doyle was a Federal Maritime Commissioner from 2013 to 2018, then CEO and Executive Director of the Dredging Contractors of America. He announced he still is a dues-paying M.E.B.A. member.”

REPORT CATALOGS UPTICK IN LOST CONTAINERS

In their latest Containers Lost at Sea study covering 2020-2021, the World Shipping Council (WSC) reports that the past two years have seen a worrying 18% uptick in cargo boxes lost at sea.

From a liner shipping industry perspective, every container overboard is one too many, and every day carriers work with the other parties in the supply chain to enhance safety. But even with proper packing of the cargo into the container, correct container weight, and proper stowage and securing aboard ship, several factors ranging from severe weather and rough seas to more catastrophic and rare events like ship groundings, structural failures, and collisions can result in containers being lost at sea. The winter of 2020-21 saw an unusually high number of weather-related incidents, and the average losses for the two-year period 2020-2021 were 3,113 compared to 779 in the previous period.

DUES PAYMENTS, P.A.F., G&W CONTRIBUTIONS THROUGH WEBSITE

The M.E.B.A. website makes it easy for members and applicants to make a dues or service charge payment, as well as contribute to the P.A.F. and Good & Welfare funds. Payments can be made by credit card, debit card or through a checking account. A recurring payment option is also available on the portal enabling automatic quarterly payments so members can “set it and forget it” and always stay current. You simply check the “Recurring Billing” box that appears at the top of the page when you’re filling out your information to enable automatic quarterly payments. This feature is also available to support the Good & Welfare and the Political Action Fund on a monthly basis. The P.A.F. is crucial for keeping U.S. shipping and the Union’s interests viable in the halls of Congress. Visit the M.E.B.A. website (www.mebaunion.org) and select “M.E.B.A. Payment Portal.” You can also go directly there by visiting <https://www.mebaunion.org/pay-your-dues/>

USE M.E.B.A. WEBSITE DUES PAYMENT OPTION TO IRON OUT LWOP/VACATION DUES LAPSES

Some M.E.B.A. bargaining unit members pay dues by automatic Dues Check-Off (DCO). But when DCO members take vacation or (in the case of the Government fleet) Leave without Pay (LWOP), there are lapses in payroll where dues aren’t automatically submitted. Those members can iron out the imbalance from this link: www.mebaunion.org/pay-your-dues/ Select the bargaining unit in the “Check Off, Catch-Up” section and make sure you remain a member in good standing.

A “Vacation Pay” option is also available. This is useful for port engineers and Union officials who can make these payments online. Many members and applicants think that paying online is the most efficient and advantageous manner to remain in good standing.

YOU SHOULD SIGN UP FOR THE WEDNESDAY JULY 6 ONLINE HQ MEETING!

Announce your intentions to virtually attend the upcoming online informational meeting hosted by M.E.B.A. Headquarters! The meeting will take place on Wednesday, July 6 at 1300 (Eastern Time). This is not an actual membership meeting, but it presents a terrific opportunity for Members, Applicants and Retirees to discuss M.E.B.A. business, exchange information and learn more about the latest Union initiatives. Attendees need to register in advance for this meeting by sending an email to mebahq@mebaunion.org You should provide your full name and proof of good standing - such as your last dues receipt/service charge number or statement that you are enrolled in Dues Check-Off (DCO) with a particular bargaining unit. Retirees should provide their full name and indicate their status. Upon confirmation, the Zoom access link will be emailed to you shortly before the meeting.

**HALLS CLOSED MONDAY FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY; WEST HALLS
CLOSED TUESDAY FOR BLOODY THURSDAY; MEETING DAYS SHIFT**

The schedule for the regular July membership meetings gets a little screwy with a pair of holidays to start out next week. M.E.B.A. halls and offices will be closed on Monday (July 4) for Independence Day. West Coast halls will continue to be shuttered on Tuesday, July 5th in observance of “Bloody Thursday.”

Bloody Thursday commemorates the 1934 longshoremen labor action led by Harry Bridges that culminated in street fighting and clashes with police. Hundreds were injured and several were killed in the riots that came to a head on July 5, 1934. Following a general strike and federal intervention, the longshoremen won a coast-wide contract, union hiring halls, and various improvements to wages and conditions.

Because of the holidays, the Boston July membership meeting will be held on Tuesday and the Oakland and Seattle meetings shift to Wednesday (see the schedule below).

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

Monday, July 4 – Independence Day - Halls Closed

Tuesday, July 5 – Bloody Thursday – West Coast Halls Closed - **Boston@1200; CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315.**

Wednesday, July 6 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Oakland@1230; Seattle (Fife)@1300; **Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thursday, July 7 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, July 8 – Honolulu@1100.

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



*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. 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.