

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 20 – May 14, 2026



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MAINE HALL IS UP & RUNNING

The Maine area membership began flocking in to check out our new Union hall in Portland this week after Representative Bill Duffy opened up shop on Monday. Regular office hours are Monday through Friday, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and member Jesse Smith was certified as the first visitor to the hall soon after it opened. The hall will host its first monthly membership meeting on Tuesday, June 9.

Bill let local area members know about the new hall in an email blast to New Englanders. He noted, "Conveniently located in Portland's historic Old Port district, the hall is easily accessible and surrounded by some of the city's best restaurants and waterfront attractions. We encourage members to stop by, take care of Union business, reconnect with fellow mariners, and enjoy everything the area has to offer. I look forward to welcoming you personally and seeing many of you in the weeks ahead."

The Union is excited to provide area members with the convenience of a local hall while also expanding outreach to graduates of Maine Maritime Academy and future mariners entering the industry. You can contact Bill at bduffy@mebaunion.org. The hall is located at 2 Portland Fish Pier, Suite 302 in Portland. The office phone is (207) 813-4091.

APL PARTNERS WITH CMES ON CADET INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

American President Lines is partnering with the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School (CMES) to cover travel costs for Maritime Academy students attending the Licensed Cadet Internship program. One of the ways the M.E.B.A. attracts high-caliber seafaring talent is through the annual three-week summer program designed to help mold the next generation of M.E.B.A. mariners. The CMES is set for this summer's program that will run from July 6 - 24. In addition, the Union often runs a one-week program during the winter to cover additional cadets who are not able to attend the July session.

APL has announced they are ready to book and fund the round-trip airfare for up to 120 cadets attending the popular CMES Internship program. When the School reaches out to confirm cadet attendance 3-4 weeks prior to the start of the program, the attending cadet will be put in contact with APL which will handle travel arrangements. The partnership will begin immediately and will also benefit those attending this July's three-week session. The

M.E.B.A. and CMES are grateful for the partnership with APL and the mutual recognition of the importance of recruitment and training for the U.S.-flag industry.

The CMES will have additional details on their website accessed at www.mebaschool.org/admissions/internship-program

The new partnership further heightens an already exceptional opportunity for mariners-in-the-making. The program provides cadets with a practical introduction to deep-sea sailing careers under union contracts and serves as a valuable pipeline, offering cadets insight into the benefits, structure, and long-term opportunities available through M.E.B.A. membership. During the three-week session, maritime academy cadets immerse themselves in a wealth of knowledge and essential skills. The summer curriculum promises an array of training courses tailored to equip cadets with vital industry know-how and certifications in USCG-approved courses that immediately expand job opportunities for these new mariners.

The Union already offers an initiation fee discount for cadets who complete the program. In addition, the M.E.B.A. allows cadets who have already made application to the Union prior to attending the Cadet Internship program, to count the weekdays spent in the summer program as Group Time. This further supports these next generation mariners in getting a foothold in the Union to more effectively launch their shipping careers.

CMES encourages members to direct interested cadets in their Junior or Senior year, as well as recent graduates, to reach out and seize this incredible opportunity by contacting the School directly through their website www.mebaschool.org or by calling (410) 822-9600. As the maritime industry evolves, the M.E.B.A. – and APL - remain dedicated to nurturing the next generation of maritime professionals, empowering them to navigate the complexities of the sea with confidence and expertise.

WIDE SWATH OF U.S. MARITIME INDUSTRY URGES END TO DAMAGING JONES ACT WAIVER

Over 100 CEOs, labor leaders, and other maritime industry representatives signed an emergency open letter to Congressional leaders calling on them to allow a temporary Jones Act waiver to expire on May 17, with no extension or reauthorization. The White House intends to extend the Jones Act waiver by another 90 days after the initial 60-day waiver expires on Sunday.

The signatories informed Congress that the waiver failed to lower gas prices as advertised upon its issuance. Instead, they say it has disproportionately benefited foreign carriers, including operators like Synergy Maritime and those with ties to China, while jeopardizing billions of dollars in private-sector investments in American shipyards. In the letter, the coalition urged Congress to use its influence to oppose any further executive action extending the waiver, arguing that such a move would run counter to the Administration's Maritime Action Plan and Executive Order 14269, which is intended to strengthen the U.S. maritime industry.

The letter has been posted on the M.E.B.A. website on the homepage. Mariners can express their disgust with the waivers by visiting [this link](#). 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.

DALI OPERATOR CRIMINALLY CHARGED

The U.S. Department of Justice has indicted two Synergy Marine companies and a technical superintendent in connection with the March 2024 allision of the MV DALI with Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge, a disaster that killed six construction workers and caused an estimated \$5 billion in damages. The defendants are Synergy Marine Pte Ltd, Synergy Maritime Pte Ltd, and Radhakrishnan Karthik Nair. Prosecutors allege the companies and Nair conspired to defraud the United States. They are charged with conspiracy, willfully failing to immediately inform the U.S. Coast Guard of a known hazardous condition, obstruction of an agency proceeding, and false statements. The two Synergy corporations are also charged with misdemeanor violations of the Clean Water Act, Oil Pollution Act, and Refuse Act for the discharge of pollutants into the Patapsco River, including shipping containers and their contents, oil, and the bridge itself. Federal officials said the case underscores the importance of strict compliance with maritime safety regulations.

M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac was gratified that criminal charges were directed at vessel principals rather than the crew, arguing that responsibility for the March 2024 Key Bridge disaster rests with the ship's foreign owners and operators. As he argued in a [recent editorial](#), Vokac said the incident cannot be attributed solely to a single mechanical failure, but instead reflects a broader pattern of cost-cutting, inadequate maintenance, and disregard for U.S. maritime safety standards. He further stated that compliance with U.S. maritime laws and the use of American-crewed operations would likely have prevented the onboard blackouts, the subsequent allision with the Francis Scott Key Bridge, and the loss of six lives.

If convicted, Synergy faces a maximum sentence of five years of probation for each felony count and a fine of up to twice the amount of the gross gain or loss caused by the allision. Nair faces a maximum of five years in federal prison for conspiracy; six years for each violation of the Ports & Waterways Safety Act; 10 years for each count of misconduct of or neglect of ship officers; five years for each count of obstructing an agency proceeding; and five years for each count of false statements.

In related news, the State of Maryland reached a final \$2.25 billion settlement with DALI owner Grace Ocean Private Limited and operator Synergy Marine Pte Ltd, resolving major claims arising from the DALI incident. The agreement compensates the State for bridge destruction, environmental harm, and broader economic losses tied to the collapse of the bridge. State officials said the settlement follows litigation in which vessel interests initially sought to limit liability under maritime law to roughly \$43.7 million and reflects Maryland's maximum recovery from the shipowner and operator based on available resources and insurance coverage. The State's claims against shipbuilder Hyundai Heavy Industries remain ongoing following findings in the National Transportation Safety Board's final report attributing fault in the vessel's loss of power.

MARAD LOOKS TO ADVANCE NUCLEAR-POWERED SHIPPING

The Department of Transportation announced a Maritime Administration (MarAd) initiative to explore the use of small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs) in commercial shipping, marking a step toward building nuclear-powered merchant vessels in American shipyards.

MarAd is seeking input from shipowners, shipbuilders, reactor developers, and other industry stakeholders on how SMRs could improve vessel efficiency, eliminate most fuel costs, strengthen national security, and support the revitalization of the U.S. maritime industrial base. The Request for Information also focuses on workforce development, regulatory readiness, and strategies for

deploying nuclear power across commercial fleets and logistics networks. Maritime Administrator Stephen Carmel said the effort is aimed at creating the market and regulatory conditions needed to attract private investment and scale the technology. Comments on the Request for Information can be submitted at [this link](#) and are due by August 5, 2026.

PEOPLE TRUST UNIONS TO MITIGATE AI TAKEOVER

The AFL-CIO released new polling data showing that more than 90% of working people favor job and privacy protections from artificial intelligence (AI) and overwhelmingly trust unions — over either political party — to deliver them. This new research is the most in-depth study of workers’ attitudes toward AI to date. The polling surveyed working people on the AFL-CIO’s Workers First Initiative on AI, the labor movement’s principles for the development and implementation of AI that ensures workers reap the benefits of the technology. More than nine in 10 respondents support most of these guardrails, including requirements for training, transparency and accountability. Key findings include the following: 1. Unions are the most credible messenger on AI for workers. 2. The AFL-CIO’s Workers First Initiative on AI has a broad consensus among voters. 3. Across the political spectrum, workers are concerned about AI as an issue of freedom and privacy—and don’t believe their employers are doing enough.

A detailed memo outlining the findings from the survey and methodology can be viewed [here](#).

AMBITIOUS NAVY SHIPBUILDING PLAN

The Department of the Navy has unveiled an ambitious Fiscal Year 2027 shipbuilding plan that calls for a major fleet expansion and strengthening the nation’s military shipbuilding industrial base. The proposal seeks \$65.8 billion for ship construction in FY 2027, including funding for 34 manned ships and five unmanned platforms. Over the next five years under the plan, the Navy would procure 122 ships and 63 unmanned systems as part of the Trump administration’s “Golden Fleet” initiative.

Acting Secretary of the Navy Hung Cao said the effort is designed to restore U.S. maritime dominance through acquisition reform, a balanced “high-low” fleet mix, and expanded industrial capacity.

REP. CARBAJAL SALUTED WITH PROP CLUB AWARD

Congressman Salud Carbajal (D-CA-24) was recognized by the International Propeller Club last week with the Frank Courtenay “Salute to Congress” Award for his longtime support of the American maritime industry. M.E.B.A. and AMC officials and staffers were in attendance to express their appreciation to the Congressman who has championed U.S.-flag shipping interests and served in various leadership positions in Congressional maritime subcommittees. “I am honored to receive this recognition from the International Propeller Club, an organization that understands the importance of investing in our maritime industry,” said Rep. Carbajal. “Throughout my time in Congress, I have been committed to protecting the Jones Act, revitalizing the U.S.-flagged fleet, and ensuring that our ports remain competitive. Moving forward, I am committed to bolstering the Jones Act, the Maritime Security Program, and cargo preference laws to revitalize the American maritime industry.”

LAST CHANCE FOR APPLICANTS TO MAKE MEMBERSHIP UNTIL DECEMBER

Qualified applicants who are trying to make membership must provide Headquarters with required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next DIC report. The DIC will meet before the upcoming June membership meetings to formalize their report that paves the way for applicants to be accepted into membership. To make membership, an applicant needs the required sailing days or

specified years of employment with a particular bargaining unit, must be current with service charges and must complete other necessary requirements which may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

Applicants should know that they are responsible for providing their local Union hall/Headquarters with the documentation demonstrating their fulfillment of the application requirements. Once they submit the requisite amount of sea time (or documented years of service) to Headquarters and have otherwise fulfilled the needed requirements as stated in the application packet they signed, they may be eligible for membership. M.E.B.A. Headquarters does not, and cannot, update an Applicant's record with sailing time/years of service unless that Applicant submits the required paperwork, i.e. discharges, sea service letters, documentation of employment, to HQ, by e-mail, fax, or mail or via your local Union hall. For further information you can visit your local Union hall or contact the HQ Membership Department at (202) 638-5355 or membership@mebaunion.org.

Members or applicants two or more years in arrears on their dues or service charges will be DROPPED from the membership or applicant rolls in June. Members and applicants that are on the DIC Drop List because of dues lapses can rescue their membership and return to good standing if they address their arrearage in time. If you are in that situation and want to retain your membership or applicant status, you must contact Headquarters immediately to make payment on your arrearage and return to good standing. Members and applicants can also make payments online, the quickest way to catch up. Visit the M.E.B.A. homepage at www.mebaunion.org.

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

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

Tuesday, June 9 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Portland, Maine@1200.**

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

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

Friday, June 12 – **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. 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