

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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



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

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### **WHITE HOUSE TURNS THE SCREW ON UNIONS WITH SERIES OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS**

President Trump issued three Executive Orders last week further diluting protections for Federal employees and undermining unions under the guise of government "efficiency." The orders were issued in the lead-up to Memorial Day weekend.

The first drastically slashes "official time" which allows unions to represent bargaining unit members – whether union or non-union – in disciplinary actions and other matters. David Cox, president of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) says that "official time" is "a policy that has saved taxpayers in the long run because it helps resolve isolated conflicts that arise in the workplace before they become costly, agency-wide problems. And contrary to some reports, official time is never used to conduct union-specific business, solicit members, hold internal union meetings, elect union officers, or engage in partisan political activities."

A second Order waters down grievance procedures and eases the way for agencies to fire workers instead of discipline. A third Order targets collective bargaining agreements to aid the Government against unions negotiating contracts. The Order says union contracts "often make it harder for agencies to reward high performers, hold low-performers accountable, or flexibly respond to operational needs."

Cox said the White House action are "basically an attempt to make federal employees at-will employees, so you can make them political employees, so you can hire anyone who had a bumper sticker for you in the last election. This is more than union busting – it's democracy busting," he continued. "These executive orders are a direct assault on the legal rights and protections that Congress has specifically guaranteed to the 2 million public-sector employees across the country who work for the federal government."

AFGE asks you to call (202) 456-1111 and urge the White House to stop silencing the voices of working people.

## **AFL-CIO CALLS FOR WORKING PEOPLE TO ORGANIZE AS JANUS RULING LOOMS**

As unions prepare for what could be another another blow, AFL-CIO is stepping up efforts to lure working people into the fold. Legal experts believe the Supreme Court's conservative majority does not bode well for unions looking for a favorable opinion on *Janus v. AFSCME, Council 31* when the high court issues their decision sometime in June. They will weigh in on state laws requiring workers represented by public sector unions to share in the cost of collective bargaining with "fair share" fees.

As the release of the opinion approaches, the AFL-CIO announced a major, national print and digital ad campaign calling on workers to unite in the face of continued corporate assaults on the freedom to join a union. As part of the campaign, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka issued a letter offering an urgent call to action: "If you want a raise, better benefits and the dignity of having a voice on the job, we're saving a seat for you. Join us—be a part of the fight to build a brighter future for you, your family and working people everywhere." An accompanying digital ad campaign will target workers online and direct them to [FreedomToJoin.org](http://FreedomToJoin.org), a new website that outlines efforts by wealthy corporate interests to take away the freedoms of working people.

This comes as a wave of collective action has continued to sweep the country. As striking teachers march and secure raises even in anti-labor states, working people from all backgrounds are embracing the power of solidarity. Unions' approval rating has broken above 60%, while dissatisfaction with corporations has risen to similarly high levels. Young people, who are disproportionately impacted by corporate-driven policy decisions, have been leading the most recent surge in unionization. Of the 262,000 new union members last year, more than three-quarters were under the age of 35. This trend has continued steadily into 2018. Last month, nearly 15,000 workers organized unions in a single week, ranging from nurses and flight attendants to Harvard graduate workers.

## **LIBERTY PEACE RÉSUMÉS REQUESTED**

The Union is asking for résumés from members and applicants interested in employment on the LIBERTY PEACE to continue to be forwarded to the NY/NJ Union hall. Forward all résumés to M.E.B.A. Atlantic Coast VP Jason Callahan ([jcallahan@mebaunion.org](mailto:jcallahan@mebaunion.org)) or NY Patrolman Nico Sermoneta ([nsermoneta@mebaunion.org](mailto:nsermoneta@mebaunion.org)) at the NY/NJ M.E.B.A. Union hall so they can ensure the Company receives them.

## **ISOLATED CASES OF ERRORS WITH MMC ISSUE DATES**

M.E.B.A. officials have noticed several instances of inaccurate dates on recently issued Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMC). The National Maritime Center admitted that isolated cases of credentials were issued utilizing the Month/Day/Year dating format instead of the correct Day/Month/Year format for normal NMC-issued credentials. In the cases discovered, the erroneous issue dates on the MMC reflected future dates thus leaving the mariner technically uncredentialed.

Mariners who have recently renewed their MMC should double-check to verify the process was completed accurately.

For further information, contact the NMC call center via e-mail to [IASKNMC@uscg.mil](mailto:IASKNMC@uscg.mil), via online chat, or via phone at 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

## **NAVY LEAGUE WEBLINK TO SUPPORT NEW PRO-U.S. SHIPPING BILL**

The Navy League has created an online link that will allow you to easily voice your support for a new pro-U.S. shipping bill to Members of Congress. Rep. John Garamendi recently introduced the “Energizing American Shipbuilding Act” - a bill to require a percentage of exported American crude oil and LNG to travel on U.S.-built and U.S.-flag ships. If enacted, H.R. 5893 could lead to the construction of 50 new U.S. tankers and create thousands of manufacturing and maritime jobs by 2040.

The Navy League link will help you dispatch a letter – which you have the option to tailor – to your Congressional delegation. It’ll take less than two minutes - visit <https://tinyurl.com/shipletter> and help drum up support for this great new bill.

## **HOUTHJI STRIKE ON TURKISH SHIP RAISES EYEBROWS AT WHITE HOUSE**

The White House expressed alarm with the latest Houthi missile strike against a commercial vessel as mariners continue to be wary when sailing close to the coast of Yemen. Reports stated that a Turkish bulk carrier was hit by at least one land-based missile or rocket as the vessel approached Yemen’s Saleef port near Hudaydah to deliver wheat earlier this month. No injuries were reported.

Following past incidents, the Maritime Administration previously issued a series of advisories warning U.S. shipping to be extremely cautious when transiting that area. The White House called for the Houthis to “engage meaningfully with the United Nations Special Envoy in order to provide a better future for all Yemenis.”

## **NOAA FORECASTERS SEE NEAR-NORMAL ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON**

NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center is forecasting a 75-percent chance that the 2018 Atlantic hurricane season will be near- or above-normal. Forecasters predict a 35 percent chance of an above-normal season, a 40 percent chance of a near-normal season, and a 25 percent chance of a below-normal season for the upcoming hurricane season, which extends from June 1 to November 30.

“With the advances made in hardware and computing over the course of the last year, the ability of NOAA scientists to both predict the path of storms and warn Americans who may find themselves in harm’s way is unprecedented,” said Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross. “The devastating hurricane season of 2017 demonstrated the necessity for prompt and accurate hurricane forecasts.”

NOAA’s forecasters predict a 70-percent likelihood of 10 to 16 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which 5 to 9 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 1 to 4 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher). An average hurricane season produces 12 named storms, of which 6 become hurricanes, including 3 major hurricanes.

## **APL RE-ANOINTED AS 'BEST SHIPPING LINE IN THE TRANS-PACIFIC'**

In a repeat win from last year, American President Lines was named the ‘Best Shipping Line in the Trans-Pacific’ at the recent 2018 Asian Freight, Logistics and Supply Chain Awards in Shanghai. APL’s Asia-North America volume grew 22% to 1.83 million TEU, compared to 2016, accounting for 35% of APL’s global volumes in 2017.

APL Chief Trade Officer, Calvin Leong said, “We are proud to receive this prestigious Award for the second year running. This for us, symbolizes a clear vote of confidence in APL from our stakeholders and in particular, our customers who entrust APL with their critical shipments. We commit to build

upon this by delivering on our commitments, improving the APL service experience, and continuing to introduce pioneering ocean solutions tailored to fulfilling their most pressing needs."

### **IMO TAKES STEPS TO ADDRESS AUTONOMOUS SHIPS**

The International Maritime Organization - the global regulatory body for international shipping has made strides toward agreeing on how to address the safe, secure and environmentally sound operation of autonomous vessels. The IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) recently endorsed a framework on how to deal with autonomous vessels - characterized as "Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS)."

The Safety Committee recognized IMO should take a proactive and leading role, given the rapid technological developments relating to the introduction of commercially operated ships in autonomous/unmanned mode. They agreed on a "scoping exercise" as a first step, to identify current provisions in an agreed list of IMO instruments and assess how they may or may not be applicable to ships with varying degrees of autonomy and/or whether they may preclude MASS operations. As a second step, an analysis will be conducted to determine the most appropriate way of addressing autonomous ship operations taking into account the human element, technology and operational factors.

### **USMMA SUPERINTENDENT JOINS MARAD**

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Superintendent Rear Admiral James Helis has joined the the Maritime Administration where he will serve as a Special Assistant to the Administrator in Washington D.C.

A new Superintendent has not yet been named and RADM Helis plans to remain at the Academy until his successor is identified.

### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Monday, June 4 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Tuesday, June 5 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, June 6 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, June 7 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, June 8 – Honolulu@1100.

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*The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and proven 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). Visit us on Facebook. For publication and related inquiries contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – [marco@mebaunion.org](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org)*