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. CREWING UP CMA CGM PHOENIX

M.E.B.A. senior officers are enroute to the APL-managed CMA CGM PHOENIX in New York as the newly reflagged vessel takes on a new crew and readies for an international run. The Neo-Panamax PHOENIX is the largest ever U.S. commercial containership at approximately 1,079 feet long and 151 feet wide, with a gross tonnage of 110,000 Gross Tons and a deadweight capacity of about 130,000 tons.

C/E Femi Olukanmi and 1st A/E Aleksandr Semendyayev will join the ship in New York with the rotary crew expected to join in Charleston after they are called out of the hall. Thanks should be expressed to the many qualified members who submitted resumes for the senior positions on the vessel. The ship is slotted to serve in the company's India America Express (INDAMEX) service connecting the U.S. East Coast to South Asia.

In March, CMA CGM Group, owner of M.E.B.A.-contracted American President Lines (APL), announced it would invest $20 billion in the U.S. domestic supply chain over the next four years and bring in a number of U.S.-flag ships commensurate with the Administration's push to fuel American shipbuilding and the U.S.-flag fleet. However, there are no imminent plans to expand the initiative beyond the one ship, and the company's continued operation of the PHOENIX and the prospective future ships are likely contingent on many factors, perhaps most notably upon the Government's ability to follow through with tangible policies and regulations that ensure the vessels improve overall economics for CMA CGM while flying the Stars and Stripes.

MEMBERS RATIFY NEW FIVE-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH LIBERTY MARITIME

The M.E.B.A. membership enthusiastically ratified a new five-year agreement with Liberty Maritime, ensuring that the five Pure Car/Truck Carriers (PC/TCs) in the fleet continue running smoothly under the expertise of our dedicated Deck and Engine Officers.

The agreement covers the LIBERTY PASSION, LIBERTY PEACE, LIBERTY PRIDE, LIBERTY PROMISE and LIBERTY POWER and officers in the fleet will enjoy strong wage, benefit, and work rule improvements.

Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan headed up negotiations over the past four months assisted by NY/NJ Patrolman Kenny Smith, HQ Contracts Rep. Mark Gallagher, Chief Engineer Erik Barton and plenty of rank-and-file input.

The agreement was put to a ratification vote at the October meetings and was approved by a lopsided margin. The new contract terms and benefits will be paid retroactively to October 1st, 2025.

SEAGOING LABOR, INDUSTRY REVITALIZATION DISCUSSED AS M.E.B.A.'s VOKAC GUESTS ON MARITIME WEBCAST

M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac recently joined International Registries, Inc. Managing Partner Clay Maitland on the webcast "Conversations with Clay" to discuss the revitalization of the U.S. maritime industry through the lens of workforce development. The show, hosted by TV Worldwide President Dave Gardy, is a regular feature on Maritime TV starring Maitland opining on a number of industry issues along with special guests such as Acting Maritime Administrator Sang Yi. Vokac brought a maritime labor perspective to the broadcast which touched on a series of important issues such as mariner retention, the SHIPS Act and U.S.-flag fleet revitalization.

Vokac emphasized the importance of cultivating a strong mariner pipeline by improving conditions and raising wages, ensuring training and career opportunities for future generations, and aligning renewed efforts to expand the U.S.-flag fleet with labor initiatives. Their discussion highlighted how workforce investment is central to sustaining a competitive and resilient American maritime sector. Maitland lamented the past loss of the Congressional committee dedicated to U.S.-flag shipping. The bi-partisan House Committee on Merchant Marine & Fisheries put U.S.-flag shipping issues in the Government spotlight for over 100 years before it was dissolved in 1995. Maitland worried that opponents of important shipping statutes and legislation, such as the Heritage Foundation, are making headway in spreading their anti-U.S.-flag shipping rhetoric on Capitol Hill.

Vokac and Maitland also touched upon the recently-introduced SHIPS Act which would help revitalize the U.S. maritime industry through shipbuilding, strengthening of U.S. cargo preference, and investment in the maritime workforce. Vokac stressed the need for tax-exemptions for U.S. mariners, a concept practiced by established seafaring nations which would amount to an immediate "pay raise" for mariners and allowing U.S. ships to better compete against foreign counterparts.

The interesting 26-minute chat can be accessed on MaritimeTV (Conversations with Clay) at https://tinyurl.com/vokac

MODIFIED PORT FEES ON CHINESE SHIPS BEGIN; CHINA RETALIATES

U.S. Customs & Broder Protection began collecting lowered port fees on Chinese-owned and operated vessels on Tuesday as the Chinese government implemented a retaliatory system to penalize U.S. vessels. U.S. officials say China's subsidies have given it an unfair edge in shipbuilding, and that the new fees will discourage carriers from purchasing Chinese-built vessels.

The new fees took effect the same day as new tariffs on imported furniture, kitchen cabinets and lumber. Non-Chinese carriers also must pay fees when operating Chinese-built vessels at U.S. ports. Many international shipping lines, which have acquired dozens of Chinese-built vessels in recent years, are moving to shift those ships off U.S. routes to avoid the charges.

The new fees are unlikely to immediately spark a rush of new U.S. ship orders but could complement broader efforts to strengthen the domestic industry. Bipartisan legislation in Congress, such as the SHIPS Act, would provide subsidies for U.S. shipbuilding, though its outlook remains uncertain.

However, last week the Trump administration withdrew pending penalties on U.S. liquefied natural gas exporters that had been set to take effect this week. The decision cancels a rule that would have suspended export licenses for companies failing to use U.S.-built LNG tankers. Industry officials had warned the requirement was currently unworkable until U.S. shipbuilding can catch up with other nations to build the specialized vessels.

In addition, the basis for calculating service fees on vessel operators of foreign-built vehicle carriers was changed and the fee was set at $46 per net ton, down from the $150 per net ton proposed in April. The USTR also said it will impose a 100% tariff on ship-to-shore cranes, intermodal chassis, and related parts effective Nov. 9. The agency also proposed duties of up to 150% on other Chinese-origin cargo-handling equipment — including gantry cranes, straddle carriers, and container tractors — with public comments accepted through Nov. 10. USTR said the payment of certain service fees may be deferred through Dec. 10, 2025 until after the office evaluates the public comments.

M.E.B.A.'S AVIATION AFFILIATE: MODERNIZATION EFFORTS SLOWED BY CONTINUED GOVT. SHUTDOWN

M.E.B.A. affiliate PASS (Professional Aviation Safety Specialists) cautioned that the ongoing Government shutdown puts the administration's air traffic control modernization efforts at risk. PASS represents over than 11,000 Federal Aviation Administration and Defense Department workers throughout the air traffic control system. "The employees PASS represents at the FAA are going to play a critical role in the plans to modernize air traffic control," said PASS President Dave Spero. "Shutting down the federal government is never in the taxpayers' best interest and certainly not good for the National Airspace System (NAS)."

PASS said that about 40 percent of its members are currently furloughed, with most of that group subject to recall. 60% of PASS members remain on the job, though they're not getting paid. PASS-represented employees are stretched thin, continually being asked to do more with fewer resources.
"The FAA needs to be fully staffed at every position if the agency wants to implement the president's vision for modernizing the air traffic control system," said President Spero. "At a time when there is much-needed focus and movement to reshape and revamp the nation's air traffic control system, it is troubling that Congress has not been able to pass a continuing resolution or full appropriations bills for fiscal year 2026," Spero noted.

PASS supports the FAA's modernization initiatives but warned that even a short government shutdown hinders progress. The union's dedicated public servants want to contribute to these critical efforts — but that requires being fully staffed, properly trained, and on the job. "All of these employees are part of the aviation ecosystem who work on behalf of the American flying public," said President Spero.

The union urged congressional leaders to act swiftly to resolve the funding impasse so that all federal employees can return to work and receive their pay without delay.

COAST GUARD/NMC SHUTDOWN UPDATE:
Due to the federal government's lapse in appropriations for Fiscal Year 2026, the U.S. Coast Guard is currently unable to process applications for mariner credentials. The National Maritime Center (NMC) and all Regional Examination Centers (RECs) remain closed. Customer walk-in service at the RECs is suspended. Examinations and other REC appointments were cancelled.

E-mail submission of applications and supporting documentation remains active. Processing will resume once appropriations are restored.

To provide relief to affected mariners, the Coast Guard is granting an extension, effective immediately, to Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMC) (National Endorsements only) and Medical Certificates (National and Pilot expiration dates only). This extension is valid through December 31, 2025, for mariners whose credentials expire in October 2025. This extension applies only to domestic operations and does not apply to STCW endorsements. Applications submitted before or during the government shutdown will be held and processed once the NMC reopens and is legally authorized to resume operations.

The full notice is available on the M.E.B.A. website on the homepage as well as on the NMC site.

ITF REPORT UNDERSCORES CABOTAGE AS CORNERSTONE OF NATIONAL SECURITY, SUPPLY CHAIN STABILITY
A new report from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) makes a powerful case that protecting domestic maritime industries through cabotage laws is not only an economic issue — it's a matter of national security. The brief emphasizes that when nations rely on their own fleets, vessels, and mariners, they gain greater control over supply chains, improve resilience in times of crisis, and strengthen their overall sovereignty.

The ITF report, *Domestic Maritime Policies: A Focus on National Security*, highlights that strong national maritime frameworks and secure domestic shipping operations are critical to safeguarding supply chains. Drawing on examples from Australia, Brazil, Canada, and the United States, the report argues that national flag shipping and cabotage—the practice of reserving domestic maritime trade for a nation's own citizens — are essential tools for maintaining both economic and security stability.

Recent research from Seafarers' Rights International underscores the global importance of cabotage: 105 countries, or about 85% of the world's nations, now have cabotage laws or policies in place — 14 more countries since 2018.

The ITF report points out that during times of crisis — such as pandemics or conflicts — nations must have access to domestic fleets and trained seafarers to sustain critical operations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, disruptions in global shipping underscored the dangers of overreliance on foreign-flag carriers. Countries with strong national fleets are better positioned to maintain the movement of essential goods.

"Autonomy over supply chains forms an integral part of any successful national economic and national security policy," said Dave Heindel, SIU President and Chair of the ITF Seafarers' Section. "We have always had a safeguard in both the USA and Canada in that our national shipping industries are bolstered through the Jones Act in the United States and the Coasting Trade Act in Canada: cabotage ensures that we are better equipped to weather these storms in times of disruption. And, because they are a common-sense approach to ensuring that coastal nations retain the capacity to move their own goods and people, these policies are now the norm and not the exception."

NEXT MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*
Monday, November 3 – **Boston**@1200. **Seattle (Fife)**@1300.
Tuesday, November 4 – **CMES**@1430; **Charleston**@1400; **Houston**@1315; **Oakland**@1230.
Wednesday, November 5 – **Jacksonville**@1300; **New Orleans**@1315; **Online HQ "Town Hall" Meeting@**1300 **(No Voting) – Register by emailing** mebahq@mebaunion.org
Thursday, November 6 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@**1230; **NY/NJ@**1300; **Norfolk@**1300; **Tampa@**1300.
Friday, November 7 – **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 Calhoon 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