

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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



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

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### **UN AGENCIES JOINTLY CALL FOR END TO CREW CHANGE CRISIS**

United Nations agencies in the maritime sector have issued a joint statement strongly urging UN Member States to take urgent action to resolve the crew change crisis faced by the world's seafarers. COVID-19 travel restrictions have prevented the repatriation of more than 300,000 seafarers who are confined to their ships long past their assignments.

The joint statement, signed by the International Maritime Organization, UN Human Rights office and the International Labour Organization, among others, points out that seafarers face a humanitarian crisis. The statement calls on all Governments to immediately recognize seafarers as key workers, and to take swift and effective action to eliminate obstacles to crew changes. The statement has been posted on the M.E.B.A. website on the homepage ([www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org)).

### **PUBLIC SUPPORT URGED TO TURN TIDE IN FAVOR OF ALASKA FERRIES**

As the State of Alaska mulls the future of the Alaska Marine Highway System and plans another slimmed down sailing schedule for the winter season, the public is being asked to voice their support for the ferries and preserve the lifeline to communities in the "Last Frontier."

Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy has drastically cut the system's budget the last two years impacting ferry fleet operations and leading to diminished service for residents, many who live in remote locations. The ferry fleet serves as a crucial connector for Alaskan communities spread out over 3,100 miles.

You can visit [www.friendsofamhs.org/signthepetition](http://www.friendsofamhs.org/signthepetition) to help inject common sense into the State's misguided push to up-end the intra-Alaska Transportation network. Alaska plans to leave citizens with only minimal essential ferry services to communities. Coupled with the already depleted funding level appropriated to the ferry system, State residents can look forward to multiple service gaps. The State points to pandemic-related revenue shortages in their decision to further isolate communities during the winter months.

A nine-person advisory group tasked with finding a path forward for the beleaguered ferry system has been looking into the problem and is expected to release a report in the next few weeks. The Alaska

Marine Highway Reshaping Work Group, appointed by Governor Dunleavy, already declared that privatization is not a realistic option and have criticized the lowball funding for the ferries as unrealistic to support transport needs. The group is examining a number of proposals including fleet and route reductions, as well as changes in management structure and governance to better assist the fleet. After two days of public hearings where many residents pleaded for the restoration of adequate service, the working group's Chairman Tom Barrett said, "I don't think I could listen to some of the people and say, 'Yeah, well, let's just trash [the ferry system]... We've got some hard decisions, but that's not one of them.'"

To keep up with the latest on the situation, you can visit [www.FriendsofAMHS.org](http://www.FriendsofAMHS.org) which catalogs AMHS news and developments and continues to urge lawmakers to restore funding. Visit the site and make sure to sign the petition.

### **TTD LEADERS ASK CONGRESS FOR RELIEF TO FRONTLINE TRANSPORT WORKERS**

Transportation Trades Department (AFL-CIO) President Larry Willis and the leaders of TTD affiliated unions, including the M.E.B.A., have signed onto a letter imploring Congressional leaders to extend relief to frontline transportation workers in an upcoming legislative package.

Workers represented by the TTD have been at their posts throughout the pandemic, putting themselves at risk to make sure that America keeps moving. "Whether it is in aviation, public transportation, construction, maritime, school and intercity bus service, postal service, passenger and freight rail, ports, or manufacturing," the letter says, "our workers have borne the brunt of the COVID-19 crisis." All through the crisis, TTD unions have broadcast the importance of frontline transportation workers noting that their workers "are faced with an impossible choice every day between risking their health and losing their livelihood."

The letter was sent to the Majority and Minority Leaders in the Senate and House and has been posted on the M.E.B.A. website ([www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org)).

Among other things, the TTD unions called for the extension of the airline worker payroll support program which is due to expire at the end of this month. They also noted that transit agencies and the passenger rail system hit hard by the pandemic desperately need federal support to ward off service cuts and lay-offs. "State and local governments face severe fiscal crises and urgently need federal assistance; especially transportation agencies, where massive budget shortfalls could grind projects and services to a halt."

The TTD unions asked that Congress act before the start of the new fiscal year (October 1) to avoid an economic blow precipitated by an extreme round of transportation worker layoffs.

### **SUPPORT FOR AMBUSHED DEPUTY SHERIFFS**

One of the two injured Deputy Sheriffs that were ambushed by an unknown gunman in Compton (Los Angeles), California has been released from the hospital while the other continues to recover. M.E.B.A. has made a substantial contribution in support of the two officers who are members of our affiliate Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs (ALADS). ALADS set up a foundation for the two deputies on its website <https://alads.org/Home/Cares> - the ALADS C.A.R.E.S. (Cops and Relatives Emergency Support) Foundation.

Both Deputies suffered numerous wounds when the assailant approached the police SUV and fired numerous rounds through the passenger side window. A 31-year old female deputy was struck numerous times including in the jaw, yet immediately came to the aide of her 24-year old partner who had also been shot multiple times. The 24-year old deputy was released from the hospital this morning to recover at home. Please visit the link and lend your support if you can.

### **UPDATED GUIDANCE FOR SEAFARER SAFETY**

The World Health Organization (WHO) issued interim guidance for protecting health of seafarers working on cargo ships (and fishing vessels) amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The guidance has been posted on the M.E.B.A. website in the “Documents & Member Notices” section. It includes advice on pre-boarding screening, hand hygiene, physical distancing and the use of masks, as well as recommendations on how to manage suspected COVID-19 cases on board. The importance of mental health services and psychological support for seafarers is also covered. The WHO also reminds Member States that they must ensure that seafarers in need of immediate medical care are given access to their medical facilities on shore.

### **CMES ONLINE COURSE HAS OPENINGS**

There are still multiple openings for the October Port Engineer & Marine Maintenance online class being conducted by the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School. The October 12–30 class is a live online course with an instructor and is not self-paced.

Students will have a fixed time (6-7 hrs.) to attend the online class. The course instructor will send each student additional information as the class date gets closer. The course is being offered in expectation of forthcoming Military Sealift Command and Maritime Administration requirements for service as Port Engineers.

Applications may be sent via the CMES website, fax (410) 822-7220, or email to [applications@mebaschool.org](mailto:applications@mebaschool.org)

### **PUYALLUP CREW PLAYS HERO TWICE IN ONE DAY**

Expert mariners in the Washington State Ferry system once again demonstrated their ability to rise to the moment this past Labor Day as their quick reaction and strong training prevailed during two separate emergency situations.

The crew of the Jumbo Mark II ferry PUYALLUP became aware of a man suffering heart problems aboard a pleasure craft near the Kingston terminal. PUYALLUP mariners worked together and launched a rescue boat with crewmembers trained for such medical emergencies. Among them were Second Mate Jesse Rongo and Able-Bodied Seaman Cory Weitz who began chest compressions and made use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). Following those efforts, the rescue boat crew brought the man back to shore where a medical team took over and brought him to a local hospital where he is recovering.

Following that excitement, the PUYALLUP crew was back at work settling down into their routine when another disaster struck. After their 19-foot boat capsized, five people, along with two dogs were tossed into the drink and were treading water about 400 yards from shore, south of Edmonds. The

PUYALLUP was nearby and deployed a rescue team once again. Fortunately all five boaters were wearing lifejackets when they entered the water and they were able to help keep the dogs above water.

Besides the PUYALLUP rescue boat, South County Fire personnel were also on scene in the agency's Marine 16 boat along with other private boats. Between them, all five survivors and the dogs were rescued from the chilly waters of the Puget Sound and transported to safety. Washington State Ferries posted a picture of the rescue (shared on the M.E.B.A. Facebook site) and said, "Thank you to all of our highly skilled crewmembers for your commitment to safety!"

### **NMC ANNOUNCES REC REOPENINGS IN CHARLESTON, N.O., NY**

The National Maritime Center (NMC) is reopening its Regional Examination Centers (RECs) in Charleston, New Orleans and New York for limited exam services beginning on Monday. In recent weeks, NMC has substantially lengthened the list of reopened RECs and Monitoring Units around the country. The full notice has been posted on the M.E.B.A. website in the "Documents & Member Notices" section. Mariners seeking to schedule examinations at these locations may do so by using the contact info below:

REC Boston – [recboston@uscg.mil](mailto:recboston@uscg.mil)  
REC Charleston – [reccha@uscg.mil](mailto:reccha@uscg.mil)  
REC Honolulu – [rechonolulu@uscg.mil](mailto:rechonolulu@uscg.mil)  
REC Houston – [rechoustonexam@uscg.mil](mailto:rechoustonexam@uscg.mil)  
REC Juneau – [recjun@uscg.mil](mailto:recjun@uscg.mil)  
REC Long Beach – [reclb@uscg.mil](mailto:reclb@uscg.mil)  
REC Memphis – [recmemphis@uscg.mil](mailto:recmemphis@uscg.mil)  
REC Miami – [recmia@uscg.mil](mailto:recmia@uscg.mil) or (305) 536-4331  
REC New Orleans – [recnola@uscg.mil](mailto:recnola@uscg.mil)  
REC New York – [recny@uscg.mil](mailto:recny@uscg.mil)  
REC Seattle – [recseattle@uscg.mil](mailto:recseattle@uscg.mil)  
REC Toledo – [rectol@uscg.mil](mailto:rectol@uscg.mil)  
MU Ketchikan – (907) 225-4496 (extension #3)  
MU San Juan – (787) 729-2368

### **MAKE SURE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IS ON FILE!!!**

Members and applicants should ensure that Headquarters has your e-mail address along with your other contact information. If you haven't filled out an M.E.B.A. Database Update Form – or if your information has changed – grab the form off the M.E.B.A. website ([www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org)) located in the "Documents & Member Notices" section. Update Forms should be sent to the HQ Membership Dept. by mail, fax at (202) 638-5369, or e-mail [membership@mebaunion.org](mailto:membership@mebaunion.org). Since the M.E.B.A. Plans office in Baltimore and Headquarters databases are NOT linked, you must also forward a signed change of address form to the Plans Office if you wish to update your information with them ([mservices@mebaplans.org](mailto:mservices@mebaplans.org)).

### **MEMBERS SHOULD KEEP A CHECK ON DOCS & NOTICES SITE**

Members and applicants are reminded to make use of the "Documents & Member Notices" section of the M.E.B.A. website ([www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org)) to find important notices and forms relating to the Union and our industry. There you'll find hall and operational notices including announcements for upcoming online membership meetings that require a registration period. If a Union hall is closed for a national or local holiday, that information will be reflected in this section. You might want to double-

check the site before making a hall visit. Important District election information is available on the site as well as COVID-19 updates. NMC/Coast Guard notices are posted as well including REC information and Marine Safety Information Bulletins.

In addition, you'll find application forms for Deep-Sea, Government Fleet and the various bargaining units. Also posted are Group Seniority Card application forms, Sailing Time Verification & Transmittal forms and Change of Bargaining Unit Affiliation forms. In addition, the M.E.B.A. By-Laws, Constitution and Shipping Rules are there as well as many other important documents including the Recommendation Form - (*Reminder: two recommendation letters are needed from a Senior officer who sailed with the Applicant for at least 60 days.*)

Please make it a habit to get familiar with that web page. To get there, go to the M.E.B.A. website ([www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org)) and scroll down to the large "Documents & Member Notices" box on the right side of the main page.

### **M.E.B.A. ELECTION: ONLY VOTES FROM MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING WILL COUNT**

According to our By-Laws, members who are not in good standing by November 15, 2020 are not eligible to vote in the ongoing M.E.B.A. election. Please refer to the M.E.B.A. By-Laws Article Two, Section 2.

### **SIGN UP FOR M.E.B.A. VACATION PLAN DIRECT DEPOSIT**

Designed for convenience, M.E.B.A. members can help themselves by taking advantage of the Vacation Plan Direct Deposit that will help save them time and ease Plans processing costs. Authorization forms are available from the Plans Office, Plans Outport Offices and at the Plans' website – [www.mebaplans.org](http://www.mebaplans.org) (Forms & Documents, Vacation Plan Forms). Complete details are available on the Plans site as well. Contact (800) 811-6322 or [vacation@mebaplans.org](mailto:vacation@mebaplans.org) for more info.

### **ONLINE OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS – (*All times are local*)**

Monday, October 5 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Tuesday, October 6 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, October 7 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, October 8 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, October 9 – Honolulu@1100.

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



*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](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org). Visit us on Facebook. 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](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org) Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.*