



MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)
"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"

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In this issue//Maritime Industry Sail-In//Rep. Garamendi's Energizing American Maritime Act//MLA & MOLA Meetings//Huge Response for Cadet Internship Program//Early Start for Great Lakes Shipping//LCA Lists Critical Issues on Lakes//Chao to Attend LIBERTY PASSION Naming Ceremony//ITF Women's Day//Get Your Docs in Order for Hall Visits//

SAIL-IN: MARITIME HAS ITS DAY ON THE HILL

For the eighth year running, M.E.B.A. joined industry advocates for the Maritime Congressional Sail-In that took place on Wednesday, March 1 in Washington D.C. This annual event has proven to be an effective way to convey to Congress the depth and breadth of an industry that is integral to the economic, military and homeland security of our nation.

The industry's presence on Capitol Hill is especially vital this year with the change of administration along with many new Members of Congress. The Sail-In helps establish relationships with Congressional members who may have had only a moderate awareness of maritime issues. It also gives the industry a chance to reinforce the friendships with lawmakers who already have an astute understanding of our issues and already support US flag shipping.

Along with M.E.B.A. officials and staff, one of our rank and file members joined the industry contingent this year. Roland Rexha, who sails with Staten Island Ferry, participated in his first Sail-In and was particularly helpful in helping Members of Congress understand the vital role our industry plays. M.E.B.A. was also represented by President Marshall Ainley, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo, Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan, Political & Legislative Director Matt Dwyer, Legal Director Nils Djusberg, as well as other staff members. American Maritime Congress representatives were also in attendance.

The cross-section of industry representatives divided into 23 groups had 131 appointments with Members of Congress in House and Senate on both sides of the aisle. About 100 industry representatives and participants spent time with almost every newly elected Member of Congress 24 House freshmen and 3 newly elected Members in the Senate – as well as existing and future supporters of U.S. shipping.

The industry groups also had meetings with the majority of the Members on crucial House and Senate Committees that oversee many of our issues including the House Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee; House Seapower Subcommittee; Senate Seapower Subcommittee; House Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee and Senate Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Subcommittee.

Though the work in DC goes on all year long, this is a mass, consolidated effort to solidify support with lawmakers and remind Congress about the importance of our industry to the economy and national security.

REP. GARAMENDI LAUDS “ENERGIZING AMERICAN MARITIME ACT”

After a long day on Capitol Hill on Wednesday, Sail-In attendees enthusiastically welcomed maritime champion Rep. John Garamendi (D-CA) to an evening reception where he spoke about his new bill to help boost the industry. H.R. 1240, the “Energizing American Maritime Act,” would require 30% of U.S. strategic energy exports to be carried on U.S.-flagged ships. The bill, introduced this week, has bipartisan support with Republicans Duncan Hunter (CA) and John J. Duncan, Jr. (Tennessee) signed onto the effort. Maritime and transportation groups worked with Rep. Garamendi to develop the bill including the M.E.B.A., Navy League, SIU, MM&P, Transportation Institute and the Transportation Trades Department AFL-CIO.

The bill requires that 15% of exported crude oil and LNG travel on U.S.-flag vessels starting in 2020, with that number ramping up to 30% starting in 2025. It also requires that exporters provide training opportunities for U.S. mariners now to ensure they’re ready for these future job opportunities. Rep. Garamendi penned an Op-Ed that appeared in “The Hill” this week entitled “Our Maritime Industry is Too Important to Ignore.” You can check it out on the M.E.B.A. homepage (www.mebaunion.org) and on the M.E.B.A. Facebook site.

MLA, MOLA MEETINGS LATE LAST WEEK

M.E.B.A. took part in both Maritime Labor Alliance as well as Merchant Officers Labor Alliance (MOLA) meetings late last week on the West Coast. Following Trustees meetings, M.E.B.A. President Marshall Ainley, Executive V.P. Adam Vokac and Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo joined representatives from five of the other MLA unions to discuss a variety of topics of mutual interest. The MLA is a cooperation between the ARA, IBU, ILA, ILWU, M.E.B.A. and the MM&P that fights to protect MLA member jurisdictions, working conditions and labor rights.

Dr. Thomas J. Mackell, Jr., a driving force in the organization who recently died, was honored by MLA representatives. A series of topics were discussed including contracts and pressing issues, the MLA Constitution and finances, and other items such as organizing. The Alliance elected its officers for the year and voted for MM&P’s Don Marcus and M.E.B.A.’s Bill Van Loo to reprise their roles as MLA President and Secretary-Treasurer, respectively.

While in Long Beach, with the principals of the Joint Operating Committee all in attendance for the six-union meeting, M.E.B.A. and MM&P staged a MOLA meeting to discuss a series of topics and initiatives to help advance the interests of both unions. Taking part in the meeting were M.E.B.A. President Marshall Ainley, Executive V.P. Adam Vokac and Secretary-Treasurer Bill Van Loo. From the MM&P side were President Don Marcus, Secretary-Treasurer Steve Werse and Pacific Ports V.P. Lars Turner.

It was a productive meeting that touched on topics including common collective bargaining agreements, the Pass-Through agreement, the Nautilus Federation (which helps further the unions’ international reach), OUIS and legislative and lobbying efforts.

HUGE RESPONSE FOR M.E.B.A. CADET INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School announced that due to the swift and huge response from maritime academy cadets, registration has closed for the wildly successful three-week Licensed Cadet Internship summer program. The three-week program, set to take place from July 10-28 this year, is designed to help mold the next generation of M.E.B.A. mariners. It is

targeted toward cadets going into their senior year and helps ease their way toward a shipping career with the Union. The cadets have a full itinerary for their three weeks while they learn more about the excellent career opportunities that the M.E.B.A. presents. In addition, they will receive valuable training from our state-of-the-art facility such as MEP/HVS, Government Fleet courses, and/or Maersk/Pasha Group training requirements.

This has always been a popular program since its inception, The School announced that the 2017 roster is completely full with over 80 people on the waiting list. Earlier this year, the CMES also hosted two one-week sessions for cadets who had conflicts attending the extended summer version of the program.

GREAT LAKES SHIPPING GETS AN EARLY START

The 2017 Great Lakes shipping season began Tuesday when the M.E.B.A.-crewed Interlake vessel DOROTHY ANN/PATHFINDER left her winter lay-up berth in Erie, PA. The tug-barge unit is sailing to Cleveland, where she initiated the shuttle of iron ore from Cleveland Bulk Terminal to the ArcelorMittal steel mill at the end of the navigable portion of the Cuyahoga River on Wednesday. The vessel loaded up approximately 15,000 tons that was mined on the Iron Range. The western coal trade will resume on March 22 when the M.E.B.A.-crewed Interlake vessel PAUL R. TREGURTHA loads 62,000 tons at Superior Midwest Energy Terminal for delivery to Silver Bay. The Sault Ste. Marie locks will reopen on March 25. It typically handles more than 80 million tons of cargo in a season, about 80 percent of which transits the Poe Lock. In 2016, U.S.-flag Great Lakes freighters moved 83.3 million tons of cargo. Iron ore for steel production remained the fleet's primary cargo, 44.1 million tons. Limestone loads for construction and steel production totaled 21.2 million tons. Coal cargoes, most of which were for power generation, totaled 13 million tons. Other cargoes included cement, salt, sand and grain.

LAKE CARRIERS LIST CRITICAL SHIPPING ISSUES ON GREAT LAKES

As Great Lakes shipping begins to awaken from its winter slumber, the Lake Carriers Association has detailed several concerns shared by its member companies concerning maritime transit. The Lake Carriers represent 13 companies that operate vessels on the Great Lakes including M.E.B.A.-contracted Interlake Steamship Company.

LCA noted that it considers the regulation of ballast water a critical issue. They pointed out that too many entities regulate the discharge of ballast water, including two federal agencies and 25 states. LCA said a bill to end the "patchwork approach" has been introduced in the U.S. Senate. That proposal, S. 168, The Commercial Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (CVIDA), would consolidate the multi-jurisdictional system with a single, nationwide, federal ballast water discharge standard that employs the most stringent standard currently available.

They repeated concerns about the reliance of Lake shipping on a single Poe-sized lock. LCA said that, "More than 90 percent of the cargo U.S.-flag lakers move through the Soo Locks transits the Poe Lock." A 2016 U.S. Department of Homeland Security study forecasts that a six-month closure of the Poe Lock would bring steel production and heavy manufacturing to a virtual stop and leave nearly 11 million Americans standing in the unemployment line. A second Poe-sized lock has been authorized at full federal expense, but it has been delayed by a low cost/benefit assessment from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

They noted the urgent need for a second heavy icebreaker to bolster the U.S. Coast Guard's aging fleet. The cargoes that were delayed or canceled by the massive ice formations during the winters of 2014 and 2015 cost the U.S. more than \$1 billion in economic activity. The damage that ice caused during the extremely cold 2013/2014 winter cost U.S.-flag vessel operators more than \$6 million to repair. A number of vessel sailings were delayed in the spring of 2015 to avoid further damage, LCA said. A second heavy icebreaker was approved in the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015. LCA is now focusing its efforts on funding the \$240 million icebreaker.

CHAO TO ATTEND LIBERTY PASSION NAMING CEREMONY TOMORROW

Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao will be on hand tomorrow in Beaumont, TX for the naming ceremony in honor of the Pure Car/Truck Carrier (PC/TC) LIBERTY PASSION. M.E.B.A. deck and engine officers recently crewed up the newbuild which was flagged to the Stars and Stripes. The Liberty-managed vessel is operating under the Maritime Security Program. Secretary Chao, a longtime supporter of the maritime industry, is a guest of honor. Beaumont Mayor Becky Ames will serve as the ship sponsor for the naming ceremony. M.E.B.A Gulf Coast V.P. Erin Bertram will be in attendance for the event.

ITF WOMEN'S DAY IS COMING UP

For the past 15 years, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is sponsoring an international day of action to campaign for women transport workers' rights and safety. International Women's Day, set for March 8th this year, is also designed to help increase the visibility of female workers in this important sector and highlight their participation in the union movement. A big focus this year is "your stories." To promote your work, inspire and provide valuable support for other unions ITF is asking you to share your stories of winning on workplace issues for women transport workers, improving gender balance in the workplace or increasing the role of women in union leadership and industrial disputes. You can send such stories to women@itf.org.uk and visit www.itfglobal.org for more info.

GET YOUR DOCUMENTS IN ORDER BEFORE HALL VISITS

Members are encouraged to have their documents in order before showing up at their Union hall. Those who have recently upgraded their license should make sure that their STCW reflects the upgrade. Your license, passport and other important documents should be valid for at least six months from the time you begin working aboard ship. Your drug-free certificates have to be valid at least until the day you join your ship.

If flying with your documents on the way to a hall, double-check that you haven't left any essential documents at home and make sure to keep your docs with you in your carry-on luggage. The primary documents you'll need include your License, STCW, MMD (with VSO or VPDSO endorsement), TWIC, Passport, USCG Medical Certificate, Annual M.E.B.A. physical card, Drug-free certificate, Group Card, Dues Receipt and proof of Return-to-Work Date. Permanent or relief employees should get their company clearance to the hall ahead of time.

Remember, a member or applicant cannot be dispatched for a job requiring STCW credentials if the Coast Guard Medical Certificate is due to expire prior to the completion of the job called. Members are encouraged to have their paperwork for the USCG Medical Certificate completed and to submit it for renewal at every annual physical in order to avoid an issue at job call. Certain jobs require proof of Horizon or Maersk qualifications, benzene or your shot records. Most mariners have the new orange-colored Coast Guard Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC). That

document combines your License, MMD and STCW together. If you have questions about your documents, direct them to your local hall.

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 (Forms, Vacation). Complete details are available on the Plans' site as well. Contact (800) 811-6322 or vacation@mebaplans.org for more info.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monday, March 6 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

Tuesday, March 7 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, March 8 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

Thursday, March 9 – L.A.@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, March 10 – Honolulu@1100.

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