



2024 Consolidated Appropriations Act funds essential maritime programs

On March 9, President Biden signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, averting a partial government shut down and, among other things, providing funding through the end of fiscal year 2024 for essential U.S. maritime programs and fleets supporting both the U.S. Merchant Marine and national defense sealift operations. The appropriations act ensures several programs that directly sustain jobs for U.S. merchant mariners and broadly benefits the U.S. Merchant Marine and its crucial roles in strategic sealift and national defense shipping operations.

For fiscal year 2024, the Maritime Security Program (MSP) is fully funded at \$318 million. The MSP's 60 militarily-useful U.S.-flagged ships are crewed by U.S. merchant mariners and operate in international commercial trades. The ships and their corresponding privately-owned intermodal cargo systems and networks are available to the Department of Defense (DOD) for military sealift operations and in national security emergencies.

The cost of the MSP amounts to a small fraction of the estimated \$65 billion or more it would cost the government to replicate the sealift capacity and the intermodal infrastructure provided to the DOD by private-sector MSP participants. Some elements of the transportation and logistics networks made available through the MSP could not be duplicated by the government at any cost.

The Cable Security Fleet of two U.S.-flagged ships is fully funded at \$10 million for this fiscal year. The Cable Security Fleet is modeled after the Maritime Security Program and will require an annual appropriation of funding by Congress.

The Tanker Security Program is funded at \$60 million for the operation of 10 qualified U.S.-flagged tankers. Although the fiscal year 2024 appropriation does not include funding for the legislatively-mandated expansion of the Tanker Security Program from 10 to 20 ships, the appropriations act does provide an additional \$2.5 million for each enrolled tanker for verifiable training costs and other expenses related to the billeting of qualified U.S. merchant mariners on-board ships operating in this fleet. Like the Maritime Security Program, the funding for the Tanker Security Program needs to be appropriated each year, even though the program is fully authorized to be funded through 2035.

The appropriations act provides funding for U.S. food-aid programs through the end of the current fiscal year. Food for Peace Title II — the primary source of food aid cargoes for U.S.-flagged vessels — is now funded at a baseline of approximately \$1.62 billion, a decrease from the previous year's funding level of \$1.75 billion. Under U.S. cargo preference requirements, at least 50 percent of U.S. government impelled food-aid shipments must be carried by U.S.-flagged vessels. While providing vital food aid to nations in need around the world, these cargoes help keep U.S.-flagged commercial vessels in service and U.S. merchant mariners, who are needed to man surge and reserve military sealift vessels in times of war and crisis, employed and current on their skills and certifications.

For the Maritime Guaranteed Loan (Title XI) Program, the appropriations act provides \$50,586,000 for new shipbuilding loan guarantees — approxi-



The MV *President Eisenhower* pictured in San Francisco Bay is one of 60 militarily-useful ships enrolled in the Maritime Security Program. The ship is operated by APL Marine Services and employs MFOW members as unlicensed engine crew.

mately \$10 million more than was authorized for fiscal year 2024 for the Title XI Program, which eases access to commercial credit for the construction of merchant vessels in U.S. shipyards. Additionally, \$3 million in funding was provided for the program's administrative expenses.

The appropriations act provides \$267,775,000 for maritime operations and training on the national level, with a total amount of \$184,729,000 designated specifically for the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in the categories of operations, capital improvements and maintenance, repair, and equipment.

The appropriations act provides \$125,788,000 for the state maritime academies, with \$22 million designated for

maintenance, repair and life extension of academy training ships; \$86,588,000 for the National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV) Program, including reimbursement to academies for certain expenses related to maintenance and berthing of new NSMVs; \$8.8 million for training ship fuel assistance; and a total of \$8.4 million for other state maritime academy programs and expenses.

The appropriations act also provides \$12 million to the Secretary of Transportation "to enter into a contract to complete the designs of 10 sealift vessels for the National Defense Reserve Fleet." Such vessels would presumably become part of the Ready Reserve Force once delivered.

Unions continue to build wealth for all Americans

New data from the Federal Reserve's Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF) highlight how important unions continue to be for increasing Americans' wealth—the total value of what people own minus the value of all their debts. The data show that the median union household has significantly more wealth than the median nonunion household, and these large wealth differences hold across various demographic groups, including race and ethnicity as well as education levels. The newly released data covering assets in 2022 demonstrate that:

- Union households possess 1.7 times the median wealth of non-union households.
- Union membership narrows the racial wealth gap, closing the distance between the wealth of white households and that of Black, Hispanic, and members of the "other or multiple race" category. Membership in a union increases median wealth between 167 percent and 228 percent for households of color compared with a 37 percent increase in median wealth for white households.
- The median wealth of union

households is greater than that of nonunion households across every education level. Union contracts provide the largest percentage increase in median wealth for households without a high school degree compared with all other levels of educational attainment.

- Union membership closes the wealth gap between working-class and college-educated households. The median wealth of nonunion working-class households is 21 percent of the wealth of college-educated nonunion households, whereas the median wealth of union working-class households is 49 percent of that of college-educated union households.
- Union households are more likely to own a home and have a retirement plan compared with nonunion households.

These findings are consistent with Center for American Progress analysis of surveys from prior years, which found union membership is associated with significantly higher wealth for all households and tends to provide the biggest boost to groups who have historically

had less wealth, such as Black and Hispanic households as well as those without a college degree.

Unions can help increase household wealth for three key reasons. First, they increase wages through the negotiation of strong contracts. Second, union workers experience greater job stability, enabling workers to remain with the same employer for an extended period. This can increase wealth by reducing the costs of finding a new job. Third, union contracts are more likely to provide enhanced benefits such as pension plans and health insurance, creating additional savings for workers.

Wealth matters greatly to achieving financial security. It shields workers from economic shocks, helps fund retirement, and enables future generations to save and achieve economic stability. For example, workers with additional savings can cover emergencies, buy a home, and better support their children.

In 2022, the median union household had significantly higher wealth than the median nonunion household. Union households hold \$338,482 in median wealth while nonunion households hold \$199,948, meaning a typical union

household is 1.7 times as wealthy as a typical nonunion household.

The wealth benefits of unions extend to all racial and ethnic groups. However, the greatest percentage wealth increases appear among households of color. While union white households have 37 percent more median wealth than nonunion white households, union households of color have between 167 percent and 228 percent more median wealth than nonunion households of color.

Similarly, the union wealth premium—or the ratio of median union household wealth to median nonunion household wealth—is significantly higher for households of color than for white households. Median union household wealth is \$397,700 for white households, \$164,557 for Black households, \$189,835 for Hispanic households, and \$527,342 for other or multiple race households. Therefore, the union wealth premium is 137 percent for white households but 267 percent for Black households, 328 percent for Hispanic households, and 304 percent for other or multiple race households. Since the union wealth premium is much higher for households of color, union membership can help nar-

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Big improvements at Georgia ports

Since 1945, Georgia's ports have served as magnets for international trade and investment, enriching the state's economy. The Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) is dedicated to providing customers with the most efficient, productive port facilities in the nation, and to creating jobs and business opportunities to benefit more than 9.7 million Georgians. Several port improvement projects are underway:

Ocean Terminal — The Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) has approved contracts totaling \$65.6 million for container yard work at the Port of Savannah's Ocean Terminal, a 200-acre facility just downriver from GPA's main container port. The board recently approved three project components, including earth compacting to prepare the site to hold container stacks, removal of a former bridge pier and preliminary utility installation behind the wharf structure. The work will be funded through revenue bonds GPA issued in 2022.

Previously approved upgrades at Ocean Terminal include the purchase of eight ship-to-shore cranes, refurbishing the wharf structure, and construction of an overpass for direct access to US 17. When all work is complete, Ocean Terminal's annual capacity will grow from 300,000 twenty-foot equivalent container units (TEU) to more than 1.5 million TEU.

GPA anticipates a third straight month of growth in March. "I'd like to thank our local partners in the International Longshoremen's Association and Gateway Terminals, along with our GPA employees for their work moving cargo across our docks with efficient, reliable service," said a port spokesman. "With a positive showing in the calendar year to date, Savannah is building momentum toward a stronger second half of Fiscal Year 2024."

Brunswick and Savannah harbor projects — The ports of Brunswick and Savannah will receive a total of \$82.7 million in federal funding for maintenance dredging and harbor improvements in a six-bill budget package passed by Congress March 8, 2024. Nearly \$38 million will go to the Port of Brunswick, including \$11.35 million for the Brunswick Harbor Improvements project and another \$26.6 million to dredge the federal waterway to its full authorized depth.

Inner harbor dredging completed earlier this year brought that portion of the Brunswick channel to the authorized 36 feet. However, funds allotted in 2023 were insufficient to bring the outer harbor from approximately 37 feet all the way to its full authorized depth of 38 feet. The new funding will cover the cost of dredging work in Brunswick's inner harbor starting in late fall of 2024. Outer harbor dredging will begin in December 2024. These items will take several months to complete.

On February 29, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp signed into law the state's midyear budget adjustment, in which the Georgia General Assembly allocated just over \$6 million for the Brunswick Harbor Improvements project, complementing the \$11.35 million in federal funding. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' recommended harbor improvement plan includes an expanded area for vessels to pass each other at St. Simons Sound, a bend widener, and expansion of the turning basin where ships are turned bow-downriver before docking at Colonel's Island.

These improvements will be made over a span of about a year after the Corps of Engineers awards a contract for the work, expected in Calendar Year 2024. The budget measures also devote \$44.7

million to maintenance dredging conducted year-round in the Savannah Harbor.

Customs facility — Construction has started on a new, larger U.S. Customs inspection facility at the Port of Savannah, more than doubling the size of its current location. The \$44.5 million project will transition U.S. Customs operations from their current 130,000 square-foot location on Garden City Terminal to an adjacent 300,000 square-foot building. The new location will accommodate federal inspections by Customs and other federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Warehouse 83B will undergo a full renovation and modernization to provide office space and to support the inspection of dry and refrigerated containers. The project should be complete by January 2025.

East River Terminal — GPA has been awarded a \$15 million federal grant to help replace Berths 2 and 3 at East River Terminal at the Port of Brunswick. The purpose is to improve safety and capacity for exporting wood pellets and peanut pellets, which are used as renewable energy sources. While conducting the initial design phase, GPA will execute a grant agreement with the federal Maritime Administration and start work on an environmental study required under the National Environmental Policy Act. In addition to the federal money, Georgia Ports will provide another \$15 million to cover the expected cost. The current dock infrastructure is more than 50 years old.

Once construction is complete, terminal operator Logistec will be able to work multiple vessels simultaneously at berths 2 and 3, improving the speed and efficiency of vessel service.

Construction is anticipated to start in late 2025.

In Calendar Year 2023, East River Terminal handled more than one million tons of bulk products, including export commodities such as wood pellets, peanut pellets and animal feed, and imports of salt, perlite and other commodities.

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California Labor's 2024 legislative priorities reflect the urgency to shape the future of work

The California Labor Federation, AFL—CIO representing over 1,300 affiliated unions with over 2.3 million union members in California, has announced 17 sponsored bills for the 2024 state legislative session.

"Labor's agenda is focused on empowering workers to shape the future of work, instead of allowing corporations and tech companies to continue playing by their own rules and amass wealth while workers struggle to get by," said Lorena Gonzalez, Chief Officer of the California Labor Federation, representing 1,300 unions and 2.3 million union members.

Last session, the State Legislature passed many labor priority bills. Governor Newsom signed some into law, including one to expand the number of paid sick days from three to five a year and another to allow legislative staff to unionize. Fast food workers won a well-deserved pay increase, and the lowest-paid health care workers did as well. But a number of critical policy proposals bills were vetoed by the Governor, including ones that would have allowed striking workers to get unemployment benefits and require human drivers on-board self-driving trucks.

This year, the Federation will send bills back to the Governor's desk that union members need, and introduce new proposals that build worker power and grow the labor movement. Californians reject a status quo of increasing inequality and the disappearance of good, high-paying, secure jobs. Working people are looking to elected officials to fight to save good union jobs, bargain strong contracts, and make it easier to join unions across California. The California Labor Federation is sponsoring the following legislative proposals:

• **AB 2602 (KALRA) — WORKER CONTROL OVER THE USE OF THEIR DIGITAL LIKENESS** — AB 2602 will prohibit contracts between a studio, individual, or any other party allowing the use of a digital replica of a performer's voice or likeness in place of in-person work unless the performer is represented by a union or legal counsel. The bill applies the same requirements to the use of a performer's voice and likeness to train a generative artificial intelligence system.

• **SB 915 (CORTESE) — LOCAL REGULATION OF DRIVERLESS VEHICLES** — SB 915 will protect jobs and public safety by giving local governments more control over the deployment of driverless commercial vehicles in their cities by requiring passage of an ordinance before they can operate locally.

• **SB 1220 (LIMÓN) — BAN THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO REPLACE PUBLIC SECTOR CALL CENTER WORKERS** — SB 1220 will protect jobs and Californians in need by prohibiting state and local agencies from contracting out call centers that serve Californians using public services or benefits to firms that utilize artificial intelligence instead of California workers.

• **AB 2286 (AGUIAR—CURRY) — HUMAN SAFETY OPERATORS ON DRIVERLESS TRUCKS** — AB 2286 will protect jobs and public safety by requiring a human safety operator (HSO) in any autonomous vehicles (AV) weighing over 10,000 pounds.

• **SB 1446 (SMALLWOOD—CUEVAS) — RETAIL WORKER DISPLACEMENT PREVENTION AND STAFFING ACT** — SB 1446 will protect workers and the public by ensuring safe human staffing levels when retail stores have self-checkout. It will also put in place guardrails to prevent worker displacement and harm to workers and the public when retail employers adopt new AI-enabled check-out technology.

• **CALIFORNIA COMPETES TRANSPARENCY** — This bill will strengthen the California Competes Tax Credit by prioritizing quality job creation with community benefits and increasing transparency in the award process to ensure meaningful pub-

lic participation and input.

• **SB 1321 (WAHAB) — INCREASING ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PANEL** — SB 1321 will update labor standards on Employment Training Panel funds by prioritizing high-quality training programs, requiring plans for targeted recruitment and hiring plans, and increasing transparency and data submission to support accountability of public funding.

• **AB 938 (MURATSUCHI) — RAISE EDUCATION WORKER SALARIES** — AB 938 sets future school funding goals with the intent of raising the salaries of classified and certificated school workers to close the wage gap and improve recruitment and retention of school site staff.

• **AB 2404 (LEE) — RIGHT TO RESPECT A PICKET LINE** — AB 2404 will protect a public employee's right to demonstrate solidarity with other workers by honoring a picket line during a labor strike.

• **AB 2557 (ORTEGA) — ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING** — AB 2557 increases accountability and transparency of public sector contracts by requiring private companies that provide services for local governments to submit reports detailing the cost of services, workforce data, performance reports, and progress toward contract objectives. Reports will be provided to the local governments to determine effectiveness and efficiency and allow for non-payment if contractors do not meet performance standards.

• **AB 2489 (WARD) — EQUAL QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTRACTED WORKERS** — AB 2489 requires private contractors that perform services for local public agencies to meet the minimum qualifications required of public sector employees.

• **AB 2561 (MCKINNOR) — PUBLIC SECTOR VACANCY RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT PLANS** — AB 2561 protects jobs and the quality of public services by requiring local public agencies to develop, publish, and implement a plan to fill vacant positions when vacancy rates reach more than 10% for one bargaining unit in a six-month period.

• **AB 2738 (L. RIVAS) — LIVE EVENT WORKER SAFETY ENFORCEMENT** — AB 2738 will expand the tools available to public enforcement agencies to ensure worker health and safety training requirements for live events at public venues are met.

• **SB 399 (WAHAB) — BAN CAPTIVE AUDIENCE MEETINGS** — SB 399 will protect workers from facing adverse action if they choose not to participate in an employer's meeting about politics or religion unrelated to their job. It does not limit the employer's ability to speak on any topic; it merely protects individuals' fundamental right of freedom of thought against efforts by employers to misuse their authority over employees by requiring employees to listen to speech concerning core matters of individual conscience.

• **SB 1116 (PORTANTINO) — UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FOR STRIKING WORKERS** — SB 1116 will help workers make ends meet and protect them from going into debt by making workers who are on strike eligible for Unemployment Insurance benefits (UI).

• **SB 1303 (CABALLERO) — THIRD PARTY LABOR COMPLIANCE ACCOUNTABILITY** — SB 1303 will increase accountability of for-profit labor compliance entities hired by public agencies for the monitoring and enforcement of prevailing wage laws on public works projects.

• **AB 2288 (Kalra) — STRENGTHEN LABOR LAW ENFORCEMENT** — This bill will add injunctive relief to the Private Attorneys General Act so workers whose rights are being violated can stop the illegal behavior.

South Korea reclaims top spot in shipbuilding orders, surpassing China

South Korea's shipbuilding industry has regained the top spot in global shipbuilding orders for the first time in three years, surpassing China. The Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Energy reported on April 3 that South Korea's shipbuilding orders in the first quarter accounted for \$13.6 billion, overtaking China's orders of \$12.6 billion, becoming the quarterly world leader. This is the first time since the fourth quarter of 2021 that South Korea has secured the world's number-one position in quarterly shipbuilding orders. The first quarter's order value represents 45.5 percent of the total annual order value of \$29.9 billion in 2020 for South Korea's shipbuilding industry.

According to a report by Clarkson Research, a British maritime and shipping research service, South Korea's shipbuilding industry recorded a higher order value in the first quarter of this year compared to China. South Korea's order value increased by 41.4 percent to \$13.6 billion, while China's order value increased by only 8.6 percent to \$12.6 billion during the same period.

South Korea has been in second place for the past three years, except for the fourth quarter of 2021, when the country outpaced China with orders worth \$7.2 billion, while China recorded \$6.7 billion in the same period. Even in the last quarter of the previous year, South Korea's shipbuilding orders amounted to \$8 billion, only half of China's \$16 billion, showing a significant gap. However, in the first quarter, South Korea surpassed China by \$1 billion.

In the first quarter of this year, the order volume of South Korea was 4.49 million CGT (Compensated Gross Tonnage), which was slightly lower than China's 4.9 million CGT. However, South Korea was ahead of China in terms of order value by focusing on building high-value ships.

During the first quarter, South Korea managed to secure 100 percent of the orders for eco-friendly ships placed worldwide, including 29 LNG carriers and 20 ammonia carriers. The total volume of orders also surpassed China in March, recording 1.05 million CGT as compared to China's 730,000 CGT.

South Korean shipbuilders HD Hyundai Heavy Industries, Samsung Heavy Industries, and Hanwha Ocean secured the top three positions in the global shipyard rankings as of March 2024. In addition, the country's exports have maintained posi-

tive growth for eight consecutive months, starting from July 2023 until last month. This growth can be attributed to the robust performance of the shipbuilding industry.

To achieve this year's export target of \$700 billion, the Ministry has recognized the significance of the shipbuilding industry and plans to create a 'Roadmap' to develop the K-shipping industry in the first half of the year. In the second half of the year, the Ministry will also unveil measures aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized shipyards, as well as the export competitiveness of the shipbuilding materials industry.

Union-Made Cleaning Supplies



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- Renewenz
- Snuggle
- Soft Scrub
- Sunlight
- Tide

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MFOW PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Meetings

On March 13, attended a meeting of the San Francisco Port Maritime Council, Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, aboard the *SS Jeremiah O'Brien* at Pier 35. Guest speaker was Jerry McNerney, who served in the U.S. Congress for 16 years; and who is now running for California State Senate. Before entering politics, Jerry earned a PhD in Mathematics and became an entrepreneur in the clean energy industry for 20 years. He helped develop much of the wind energy technology in Northern California, reducing carbon emissions and creating good-paying local jobs.

On March 20, participated in kickoff meeting of the Maritime Workforce Working Group 2024. This working group is mandated by the FY2024 National Defense Authorization Act to address critical issues related to the U.S. maritime workforce. Also on March 20, the trustees of the various MFOW trust funds met in the Conference Room at MFOW Headquarters.

On March 21, the trustees of the various SIU Pacific District trusts funds met in the Conference Room at the plan offices on Harrison Street in San Francisco.

On March 29, participated in a Supply Chain Industry Listening Session convened for awareness and insight into ongoing supply chain disruptions, including the recent Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse and ongoing challenges in the Red Sea. Federal representation included the Department of Transportation, Federal Maritime Commission, National Economic Council, and National Security Council.

RRF

As previously reported, the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) contract has been out to bid for quite a while. There was a six-month contract extension on January 27, 2024, and no wage and benefit raises were implemented on that contract anniversary date. On March 21, the AMO, MEBA, MFOW, MM&P, SIU and SUP sent a letter to the Department of Labor Wage & Hour Division requesting a four percent wage escalator for all personnel serving aboard the RRF fleet. No response to date. Will keep the membership informed.

IECEX Training

On March 18, the Union was notified by Matson labor relations that they will contract with Source IEX International Electrical Equipment and Component provider to conduct U.S. Coast Guard/International Maritime Organization (IMO) IECEX required training for LNG vessel maintenance and performance. Matson will host the training course to provide as many Electricians as possible the required training for Matson LNG powered vessels, starting with Electricians in the Los Angeles/Long Beach Area where most of the Electrician jobs are dispatched.

The initial scope of the Coast Guard/IMO IECEX requirement is that any personnel that should carry out inspections and maintenance of electrical installations in explosion hazardous spaces should be qualified pursuant to IEC 60079-17, item 4.2., as described in the CG-ENG Policy Letter No.01-12, CH-1. For MFOW, the personnel described above would include the Electrician/Reefer/Junior (ERJ) combination ratings serving aboard LNG-propelled vessels.

The offsite training will be held from April 29 through May 3 at the Courtyard Long Beach Downtown Hotel by Marriott, 500 East First Street, in Long Beach. The training period includes four days of instruction and one day of testing. Classes will be in session from 0800 to 1700 with an abbreviated lunch period. Matson will provide refreshments and box lunches.

Matson will provide ten seats for MFOW members with additional openings possible. Prerequisites for candidates are as follows:

- Must be in good standing to ship as Electrician (ERJ) with Matson.
- Must have proof of current STCW Basic IGF Code Operations endorsement on their Merchant Mariner Credential.
- Candidates will also need to provide valid email address, phone number and copy of driver's license or passport (front and back).

The MFOW Training Coordinator will first reach out to Southern California-based candidates who have been on the waiting list. Once the list of candidates is established and confirmed, Matson will email the candidates directly with the details and instructions for attending the course.

A few more courses should be available throughout the year.

LNG Conversions

On March 28, the Union was notified by Matson labor relations that the tentative dates for completion of dry-docking/LNG conversion for the *Manukai* and *Kaimana Hila* are August 13, 2024, and March 21, 2025, respectively. Members who wish to work aboard Matson's three LNG-powered vessels need to complete the STCW Basic IGF Code Operations course and get the endorsement placed on their Merchant Mariner Credential.

Watson-class Vessels

On March 29, the Union was informed by Patriot Contract Services (PCS) that the Military Sealift Command (MSC) Program Manager for the Watson-class contract has given preliminary notification that the U.S. Army may be winding down their pre-positioning requirements for cargo aboard six Watson-class vessels over the next four to 16 months. This would affect the *Charlton*, *Pomeroy*, *Red Cloud*, *Soderman*, *Watkins* and *Watson*.

The Union has learned that the U.S. Army intends to download the six Army Prepositioned Stock vessels and move toward a land-based prepositioning model. When the vessels return to the U.S., they will download their cargo and likely transition to ROS at locations to be determined.

PCS will engage with MSC to gain more clarity regarding the timeline of this Army budget-driven transition. It is the goal of the company to minimize the impact of the unexpected change to the Watson-class fleet, as well as on mariners and employees. The company will make all efforts to utilize their political and industry relationships and work with labor to ensure the vessels continue to serve the national security interests.

For the MFOW, the layup of the six Watson-class APS-3 vessels will result in a substantial loss of good-paying jobs and a significant hit to our financial stability.

Food Aid

Each year our nation's international food aid programs, including P.L. 480 Title II Food for Peace, Food for Progress, and McGovern-Dole International Food for Education within the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, help reach millions of vulnerable people around the world. These programs have enjoyed significant bipartisan support for 70 years. On April 2, the MFOW joined a broad coalition of 123 organizations, to respectfully request Congress continue to fully support these programs and that the fiscal year 2025 agriculture appropriations funding for these critical accounts be increased to at least \$2.4 billion.

Unions continue to build wealth for all Americans

Continued from page 1

row the racial wealth gap. Union contracts can thereby help address systemic racial inequality.

Union membership is also particularly beneficial for working-class households, defined as those without a college degree. The median union household has more wealth than its nonunion counterpart at every education level measured: for workers with less than a high school degree, those who have completed high school, those with some college, and those who have a college degree or higher. The union wealth premium is greatest in percentage terms for workers without a high school degree. In dollar terms, the premium is highest for households with some college education.

The median wealth for union households without a high school degree is \$69,510, but it is only \$22,800 for nonunion households—a union wealth premium of 305 percent. The median wealth for union households with some college education is \$338,482 compared with \$128,350 for nonunion households—a difference of \$210,000. Thus, union workers without a high school degree enjoy triple the median wealth, and union workers with some college education enjoy the greatest dollar gains over their nonunion peers.

This union wealth premium can help close the gap between working-class households and college-educated ones. While the median wealth of nonunion working-class households is only 21 percent of the wealth of college-educated nonunion households, the median wealth of union working-class households is 49 percent of that of college-educated union households. Working-class nonunion households have \$98,800 in me-

dian wealth, while working-class union households have \$262,600 in median wealth, significantly closer to the median wealth of nonunion college graduates (\$476,105)—thus helping close the education wealth gap. Unions offer working-class households another path to the middle class beyond a four-year college degree. Union households with a college degree have the highest median wealth, at \$533,436.

The relationship between union membership and wealth is significant and demonstrates the crucial role unions play in empowering workers. These 2022 metrics are consistent with CAP's prior findings from nearly a decade of Survey of Consumer Finances data. At a time of high economic inequality, these metrics show union contracts can close wealth gaps across race and education dimensions and provide pathways to the middle class for all Americans.

Although the public broadly supports unions, and workers would increasingly like to join them, there are still many obstacles to union membership. In approximately one-third of union organizing campaigns, for instance, employers fire workers, despite it being illegal to do so. Companies face few financial repercussions because federal labor law lacks sufficient enforcement mechanisms to ensure workers can exercise their rights to join unions and bargain collectively.

Policymakers need to act and can start by passing the Protecting the Right to Organize

(PRO) Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act. These reforms will protect workers' rights, provide incentives to unionize, and hold lawbreaking companies accountable.

Lastly, employers can make a difference today by respecting their workers' right to unionize—rejecting activities such as worker intimidation and delayed proceedings. With these actions, workers and the public can enjoy the benefits of union membership.



VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

There were 47 members registered: 20 in Class A, 10 in Class B, and 17 in Class C.

I attended the National Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee meeting at Compass Courses in Edmonds, Washington. If you have any concerns regarding merchant mariner credentialing, it might be a good idea to attend an N-MERPAC meeting in the future. These meetings are open to the public and it's a great opportunity to get your voice heard and implement change.

Compass Courses is a great facility and the owner, Julie Keim, and her staff made everyone feel quite welcomed.

As far as union business goes, it's the same old story here. Rather than go into particulars, I'll say we can all do better. This is a good organization and always has been. If you want to keep it that way, do your part.

Looking forward to some warmer, more cheerful weather. Stay safe, work safe, help protect what we have.

Fraternally, **Deyne Umphress**

BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT

Here is the vessel rundown for March 2024:

Matson Navigation Company

On the Pacific Northwest triangle run: *MV Manulani* — delegate ERJ Kris Chinen, #3861, shipped an ERJ for time up, good ship and good feeder, no beefs. *MV R.J. Pfeiffer* — delegate REJ Reynato Llona, #3901, no beefs.

On the Pacific Southwest triangle run: *MV Mokihana* — delegate REJ Scanlon Henneberry, #3717, no beefs. *MV Mahimahi* — delegate REJ Baldev Singh, #3811, no beefs.

APL Maritime Services

On the EX1 run: *MV President F.D. Roosevelt* — delegate REJ Daniel Harper, JM-5357, no beefs. *MV President Wilson* — delegate DJU Robin Angelito, #3991, no beefs. *MV President Cleveland* — delegate Agripino Camba, #3888, shipped an additional REJ, no beefs.

Patriot Contract Services

USNS Watson shipped a Wiper for time up.

Fraternally,
Bobby Baca

MTD statement on Francis Scott Key Bridge incident

March 26, 2024

The Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, extends its most solemn condolences to the victims of the Francis Scott Key bridge collapse that occurred early Tuesday morning in Baltimore. At around 1:30 a.m, the *Dali*, a Singapore-flagged container vessel on its way to Sri Lanka, collided with the bridge. It is currently unknown how many individuals were on the bridge at the time of the incident, or as to how many casualties may have resulted from the event.

Many of the details of this incident will be subject to investigation as the situation unfolds. In addition to motorists who were on the bridge, potential victims may also include work crews who were performing maintenance on the span. Maryland Governor Wes Moore has declared a State of Emergency, and will be deploying federal assistance to the site of the collapse immediately. Rescue crews are currently on the scene, searching for survivors.

The MTD and its Baltimore Port Maritime Council hope with the fullest sincerity for the safety of those on the bridge during the time of the collapse, and expresses its solidarity with the brave first responders who are assisting with the rescue and recovery effort. Along with the rest of the greater Baltimore-Washington community, we are keeping the families of those missing in our hearts and monitoring the situation closely.

NTSB investigation in Baltimore bridge collapse

The National Transportation Safety Board has begun its investigation of the collision that destroyed Baltimore's four-lane Francis Scott Key Bridge on March 26 in a disaster that claimed at least six lives. Two workers were rescued from the water, one with severe injuries. It is believed that the Singaporean-flag 984-foot containership *MV Dali* lost both engine and electrical power shortly after it left the Port of Baltimore. Sources believe the diesel backup generator kicked in and electrical systems were restored, but with propulsion gone, the vessel barreled into a bridge support structure at about 7-8 knots. Thirty seconds later the bridge folded into the Patapsco River.

The bodies of two of the six night-shift construction workers believed to be on the bridge were recovered on March 27 in a submerged truck. Reports indicate the other four could be in vehicles that plunged into the Patapsco but are covered in bridge debris. The crew, which consisted of mostly Indian nationals and included two harbor pilots (including an apprentice), were uninjured.

The NTSB confirmed that the pilot's emergency call to transit authori-

ties to close the bridge moments before the collapse may have prevented additional deaths. The *Dali* is owned by the Singapore-based Grace Ocean Private Ltd. and was being chartered by Danish shipping giant Maersk. The NTSB released an initial timeline of the March 26 incident:

- 0039 — *Dali* container ship departs from Seagirt Marine Terminal.
- 0107 — The ship enters Fort McHenry Channel.
- 0124 — Audible alarms recorded on ship's bridge audio. Voyage data recorder (VDR) stops recording vessel's system data.
- 0126 — VDR resumes recording after glitch. Steering commands captured on audio.
- 0126 — Pilot requests assistance from nearby tugboats. Pilot association dispatcher notifies Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) duty officer about blackout.
- 0127 — Pilot orders port anchor dropped and issues steering commands.
- 0127 — Pilot reports loss of power and approaching bridge. Transit authority duty officer orders traffic



March 21, 2024

Jessica Looman, Administrator
Wage and Hour Division
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Re: Request for Information related to
Service Contract Act Wage Determination 1998-0298

Dear Administrator Looman,

The undersigned labor unions (Unions) represent 100% of the U.S. Coast Guard licensed deck and engineering officers and unlicensed sailors providing operation and maintenance services to the Maritime Administration (MARAD) and its contracted ship managers (Ship Managers) on approximately fifty-two (52) cargo vessels stationed nationwide on the East, Gulf, and West coasts of the United States as part of the Ready Reserve Force (RRF). We jointly make these two requests for information related to Revision 31 (February 23, 2023) and Revision 32 (Dec 26, 2023) to wage determination number 1998-0298.

The determinations reflected in Revision 31 and Revision 32 provide wage rates and fringe benefits for the licensed and unlicensed merchant mariners serving aboard cargo vessels in the RRF. The determination is based on the collective bargaining agreements (CBA) between the Ship Managers and their service employees' labor representatives.

For context, MARAD exercised one remaining 6-month contract extension before its contract with the Ship Managers terminated on January 26, 2024. The Unions submitted modified CBA extension agreements to the Ship Managers in late December of 2023, providing for a 4% total labor cost increase effective January 27, 2024. Service employees covered under the CBAs in question have received annual contract adjustments on January 27 every year dating back seven years to the first anniversary date of contract commencement. The Ship Managers have nevertheless refused to sign the Unions' modified CBA's citing pressure from MARAD and, specifically, a communication from MARAD Contracting Officer Rob McDermott stating "[f]or the next option period, no contract adjustment is required."

Accordingly, our first request is that within seven days of the date of this letter the WHD provide us with the any and all material related to Revisions 31 and 32, as well as material related to upcoming RRF work that is out to bid now; that is, for the file on the two determinations already performed by the WHD as well as on the one most recently requested by MARAD. A 4% increase is modest in comparison to cost increases negotiated in the private sector during a time of unprecedented labor shortage in this industry.

We do not know what information MARAD provided or representations MARAD made to the WHD. We also do not understand how the purposes of the McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act are served by artificially depressing wages of mariners. Being able to review the WHD file on past and pending wage determinations will, we hope, allow for a better understanding if this is the case.

Both Revision 31 and Revision 32 mention CBAs whose terms are described as running through July 27, 2024. Ship Managers' refusal to execute our MOUs under pressure from MARAD impacts wage determinations being performed related to RRF contracts currently out to bid for work commencing in July. **Our second request is therefore that WHD meet with representatives of our Unions to ensure that wage determinations being conducted reflect the reality of wages, bargaining and circumstances in the industry.**

Thank you for your immediate attention to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

Willie Barrere AMO Don Marcus MM&P Adam Vokac M.E.B.A. Anthony Poplawski MFU David Heindel SIU David Connolly SUP

cc: ASM/Patriot Contract Services
Keystone Shipping Services
Matson Navigation Company
Crowley Government Services
Pacific-Gulf Marine
TOTE Services
Ocean Duchess, Inc.
Pasha Hawaii

Active MFOW members

Retain your Welfare Fund eligibility.

MAIL or TURN IN all your Unfit for Duty slips to:

MFOW Welfare Fund,

240 2nd Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION TRAINING PROGRAM — 2024

Interested members who meet the Training Program eligibility requirements and prerequisites outlined for each course may obtain an application online at mfoww.org or at Headquarters and branch offices. All applications must be accompanied by a copy of the member's Merchant Mariner Credential.

(a) Eligible participants are MFOW members who:

- (1) Have maintained A, B or C seniority classification.
- (2) Are current with their dues.
- (3) Are eligible for medical coverage through covered employment.
- (4) Have a current Q-card (annual physical) issued by the Seafarers' Medical Center and are fit for duty.

(b) Non-seniority applicants:

(1) Applicants may be selected for required government vessels training as required to fulfill manning obligations under the various MFOW government vessel contracts.

(2) Selectees under this provision must meet all other requirements for seagoing employment and shall have demonstrated satisfactory work habits through casual employment.

Maritime Institute

Courses are conducted at Maritime Institute in San Diego, California, contingent on enrollment levels. Tuition, lodging and transportation are pre-arranged by the MFU Training Plan.

Military Sealift Command (MSC) Government Vessels Course

This four-day course is required for employment aboard various MSC contract-operated ships and includes the following segments: Shipboard Damage Control; Environmental Protection; Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defense; Helo Firefighting.

May 13-16 June 10-14 July 22-25

Military Sealift Command (MSC) Readiness Refresher

This two-day course renews the following government vessel segments: Helo Firefighting; Environmental Protection; Damage Control; and Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defense. The full versions of these segments must have been completed within 5 years of taking the Readiness Refresher course.

May 2-3 May 30-31 July 11-12

Basic IGF Code **New**

Any applicant who has successfully completed your Basic IGF Code Operations (MARINS-805) course will satisfy: The training and standards of competence required by STCW Code Section A-V/3 and Table A-V/3-1, as amended 2010, for original or renewal of STCW endorsement for Basic IGF Code Operations. A course certificate may be used for one application which results in the issuance of an endorsement and may not be used for any application transactions thereafter.

June 17-18 July 15-16 August 26-27

QMED Fireman/ Oiler/Watertender

A member who successfully completes the 160-hour Qualified Member of the Engine Department (QMED) Fireman/Watertender/Oiler course will satisfy the requirements needed for the national endorsements as QMED Fireman/Watertender and QMED Oiler, provided all other requirements, including sea service, are also met. **Prerequisites: 180 days or more of MFOW-contracted sea time as Wiper; PLUS, Coast Guard approval letter for endorsement upgrading, which certifies minimum of 180 days' sea time as Wiper.**

September 9-October 4 October 21-November 15

STCW Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch

A member who successfully completes the 40-hour Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch (RFPEW) course will satisfy the requirements needed for the STCW endorsement as RFPEW. **Prerequisites: See QMED Fireman/Watertender and Oiler course. It is recommended that eligible candidates schedule the QMED Fireman/Watertender and Oiler and RFPEW courses back-to-back for a five-week combined training session.**

August 5-9 October 7-11 November 18-22

QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer

A member who successfully completes the 240-hour QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer course will satisfy the requirements needed for the national endorsement as QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, provided all other requirements, including sea service, are also met. **Prerequisites: Endorsements as QMED Fireman/Watertender, QMED Oiler, and RFPEW; PLUS 180 days of MFOW-contracted sea time while qualified as RFPEW.**

July 15-August 23 September 16-October 25

STCW Able Seafarer-Engine

A member who successfully completes the 40-hour Able Seafarer-Engine (AS-E) course will satisfy the requirements needed for the STCW endorsement as AS-E. **Prerequisites: Endorsements as QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, QMED Fireman/Watertender, QMED Oiler and RFPEW; PLUS 180 days or more of MFOW-contracted sea time while qualified as RFPEW.**

June 10-14 August 19-23

QMED Pumpman/Machinist

A member who successfully completes the five-week QMED Pumpman/Machinist course will satisfy the requirements needed for the national endorsement as QMED Pumpman/Machinist. **Prerequisites: 360 days or more of MFOW-contracted sea time while holding the endorsements as QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, QMED Fireman/Oiler/Watertender, RFPEW and AS-E.**

September 30-November 1

High Voltage Safety

This five-day course is comprised of classroom lectures, simulator-based training, and assessments on our state-of-the-art TRANSAS TechSim 5000 High-Voltage (HV) Circuit Breaker Simulator. Students will be exposed to the principles behind shock hazards, and arc flash/arc blast phenomena. Practical exercises will help students understand how shock and arc flash boundaries are calculated, and most important, Incident Energy calculations to determine selection of required arc flash PPE. The assessment will incorporate all aspects of training including the proper use of PPE, live line tools, multimeters, other test equipment, and an implementation of a sample checklist for a Job Safety Analysis plan dealing with HV. **Prerequisites: QMED Electrician-Refrigerating Engineer/Junior Engineer/RFPEW and Able Seafarer-Engine endorsements.**

May 20-24

June 10-14

July 8-12

New in 2024

Maritime Institute: 1130 West Marine View Drive, Everett WA

QMED Oiler: June 3-21, September 9-27

STCW Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch: June 24-28, August 12-16, September 30-October 4

STCW BASIC TRAINING

All Basic Training Certificates Hold A One-Year Validation When Used For Mariner Document Renewal.

STCW Basic Training Revalidation

The BT Revalidation course is designed for personnel who have previously completed a 40-hour Basic Training course and have at least one year of approved Sea Service within the last five years.

Maritime Institute, San Diego, CA: April 26, May 3, May 17, May 31

Maritime Institute, Honolulu, HI: June 7, August 2, October 11, December 6

Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: April 26, May 28, June 17, July 12, October 4, November 8, December 20

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: Pending

Compass Courses, Edmonds, WA: April 25-26, June 18-19, July 23-24, August 20-21

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: April 22-23, June 1-2, June 24-25, July 22-23

STCW Basic Training Refresher (three days)

The BT Refresher course is designed for personnel who have previously completed a 40-hour Basic Training course and have NOT completed one year of approved Sea Service within the last five years.

Maritime Institute, San Diego, CA: May 22-24, June 12-14, August 21-23, September 11-13

Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: May 29-31, July 1-3, September 18-20, November 25-27

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: April 22-24

Compass Courses, Edmonds, WA: May 14-16, June 18-20, July 23-25

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: June 1-3, December 7-9

MSC ship crew extinguishes engine fire, ship towed back to Alabama

A fire broke out in the engine room of the *USNS Sgt. William R. Button*, leaving it stranded off the coast of Dauphin Island in the Gulf of Mexico on March 28. *Sgt. William R. Button* is a Military Sealift Command (MSC) ship. It was conducting routine operations at the time of the fire.

There were 53 people aboard the ship at the time of the fire, which left the ship stranded about 24 miles from Dauphin Island. The crew was able to use the onboard CO2 fire suppression system to extinguish the fire. The cause of the fire is under investigation. There were no injuries.

Four tugboats brought the ship to Alabama Shipyard in Mobile, Alabama. It arrived on March 29.

Button was in Alabama for scheduled maintenance. The ship is part of the Navy's Maritime Prepositioning Force.

General Dynamics Quincy Shipbuilding Division in Quincy, Massachusetts, built the ship, which the Navy acquired in 1986. It entered service under MSC as *MV Sgt. William R. Button* and then entered the service as *USNS Sgt. William R. Button* in 2009, according to the Navy.

Weingarten Rights

Weingarten rights guarantee an employee the right to union representation during an investigatory interview. These rights, established by the Supreme Court, in 1975 in the case of J. Weingarten Inc., must be claimed by the employee. The supervisor has no obligation to inform an employee that he or she is entitled to union representation. This brief summary of your Weingarten rights could prove beneficial.

What is an Investigatory Interview? An investigatory interview is one in which a supervisor questions an employee to obtain information which could be used as a basis for discipline or asks an employee to defend his/her conduct. If an employee has a **reasonable belief** that discipline or discharge may result from what he says, the employee has the right to request union representation. An employee must state to the employer that he wants a union representative present; the employer has no obligation to ask the employee if he wants a representative. When an investigatory interview occurs, the following rules apply:

Rule 1 — The employee must make a clear request for union representation before or during the interview. The employee can't be punished for making this request.

Rule 2 — After the employee makes the request, the supervisor has three options. They may either:

- Grant the request and delay the interview until the union representative arrives and has a chance to consult privately with the employee; or

- Deny the request and end the interview immediately; or
- Give the employee a choice of having the interview without representation or ending the interview.

Rule 3 — If the supervisor denies the request and continues to ask questions, this is an unfair labor practice and the employee has a right to refuse to answer. The employee cannot be disciplined for such refusal but is required to sit there until the supervisor terminates the interview. Leaving before this happens may constitute punishable insubordination.

An employee has NO right to the presence of a union representative where:

- The meeting is merely for the purpose of conveying work instructions, training, or communicating needed corrections in the employee's work techniques.
- The employee is assured by the employer prior to the interview that no discipline or employment consequences can result from the interview.
- The employer has reached a final decision to impose certain discipline on the employee prior to the interview, and the purpose of the interview is to inform the employee of the discipline or to impose it.
- Any conversation or discussion about the previously determined discipline which is initiated by the employee and without employer encouragement or instigation after the employee is informed of the action.

Even in the above circumstances, the employee can still ask for representation. Most employers will permit a representative to attend even when not required.

Food Aid letter

April 2, 2024

The Honorable Andy Harris
Chair
Subcommittee on Agriculture
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Chair
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Hoeven
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Harris, Chair Heinrich, Ranking Member Bishop,
and Ranking Member Hoeven:

Each year our nation's international food aid programs, including P.L. 480 Title II Food for Peace, Food for Progress, and McGovern-Dole International Food for Education within the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, help reach millions of vulnerable people around the world. These programs have enjoyed significant bipartisan support for 70 years. We, the undersigned organizations, respectfully request Congress continue to fully support these programs and that the fiscal year 2025 agriculture appropriations funding for these critical accounts be increased to **at least \$2.4 billion**.

Global food assistance is required as drought, continuing conflict, inflationary costs, and other crises persist around the world. Chronic and acute hunger have continued to rise and the U.N. World Food Programme warns that the number of people facing crisis levels of food insecurity has risen to 333 million as a result of lingering effects from the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing conflict (including the war in Ukraine and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza) and climate-related extreme events. According to the Mid-Year Update of the Global Report on Food Crises, there are currently at least 238 million acutely food insecure people around the world, which is a 10% increase from the 2022 figure. With hunger on the rise, now is the time for America to continue its global leadership role by showing full support for U.S. international food assistance programs.

International food aid programs not only benefit the recipients, but also U.S. economic and national security interests. Food aid, in all its forms, is made available through these programs usually bearing the U.S. flag and/or marked "from the American people." By furthering stability in fragile countries and sparking hope in countless people who are struggling to survive, U.S. strategic interests are protected and expanded. Ultimately, these kinds of foreign assistance programs help create a firm foundation for vulnerable communities to grow and prosper, which is why many former food aid recipient countries are now among the most important U.S. trading partners.

The use of American grown commodities as food aid has been a cornerstone of U.S. foreign assistance programs for decades and U.S. food aid has continually evolved and adapted to meet changing needs. Using a combination of U.S. commodities, cash, vouchers, and locally purchased food, the U.S. has worked to expedite hunger relief, increase resilience, and save countless lives. Through a joint public-private partnership, American farmers, millers, mariners, port workers, private voluntary organizations (PVOs), and the U.S. government have developed the strongest front-line response to urgent global food insecurity. Food aid is a tangible source of hope to those in need, and American stakeholders take great pride in their support for the world's most vulnerable people through these programs.

While our organizations at times have policy differences, we stand united in our belief that U.S. food aid programs are among the world's most critical foreign assistance programs, save countless lives, bolster our nation's global security, and help millions in need around the world. We ask that you continue the lifesaving and life improving work of food aid by increasing the agriculture appropriations funding in fiscal year 2025 to **at least \$2.4 billion** to carry out the necessary and vital work accomplished in the P.L. 480 Title II Food for Peace, Food for Progress, and McGovern-Dole programs.

Thank you,

ACDI/VOCA
ADRA
American Association of Port Authorities
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Maritime Congress
American Maritime Officers
American Maritime Officers Service
American Soybean Association
APL
Apostleship of the Sea - USA
Better World Campaign
BKA Logistics LLC
Blue Water Shipping Co.
Blumont
Breedlove Foods, Inc.
Bunge
Cantera Partners
CARE
Cargill
Colorado Association of Wheat Growers
Colorado Sorghum Growers
Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA)
Didion Milling Inc.
dsm-firmenich na Edesia Nutrition
Euro-America Shipping
Fettig & Donalty, Inc.
Food for the Hungry
Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers
Global Communities
Global Food & Nutrition Inc.
Grain Millers, Inc.
GrainPro Incorporated
Heartland Goodwill Enterprises
Helen Keller Intl.
Idaho Grain Producers Association
Idaho Wheat Commission
Illinois Soybean Association
ILWU Washington Area District Council
Improving Economies for Stronger Communities
Inlandboatmen's Union
InterAction
International Alliance to End Hunger
International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots
Islamic Relief USA
James J. Flanagan Shipping
Kansas Association of Wheat Growers
Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association
Kendall Packaging
Land O'Lakes Venture 37
Liberty Maritime Corporation
LifeLine Foods
Lone Star Integrated Distribution
Mana Nutrition
Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association
Marine Firemen's Union
Maritime Inst. for Research and Industrial Development
Meds & Food for Kids
Midwest Dry Bean Coalition
Moran Towing Corp
Muller Shipping Corporation
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Cooperative Business Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pecan Federation
National Shipping of America
National Sorghum Producers
Natural Enrichment Industries, LLC
Navy League of the United States
Nebraska Dry Pea & Lentil Commission
Nebraska Wheat Board
Nebraska Wheat Growers Association
North American Millers' Association
Northharvest Bean Growers Association
Northeast Chartering Group, LLC
Oklahoma Wheat Commission
Oklahoma Wheat Growers Association
Oldendorff America Ltd
One Acre Fund
Oregon Wheat Growers League
Patriot Maritime
Port Arthur International Seafarers Center
Port of Kalama
Port of New Orleans
Port of Tacoma
Port of Vancouver USA
Potomac Maritime LLC
ProAmpac
Reliance Bulk Carriers LLC
REPCO
Sailors' Union of the Pacific
Schuyler Line Navigation Company
Seafarers International Union
Sealift Inc.
SEMO Milling LLC
South Dakota Wheat Grower Association
Southern Gulf Packaging & Logistics
Stella Maris — Diocese of Beaumont
Texas Wheat Producers Association
The Port of Virginia
Tiger Soy LLC
Transportation Institute
Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO
Transylvania Vocational Services
Trickle Up
TVS, Inc.
U.S. Dairy Export Council
U.S. Dry Bean Council
U.S. Peanut Federation
UNISHIPPING SAS
US Ocean LLC
US Pea & Lentil Trade Association
US Wheat Associates
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
USA Rice
Washington Association of Wheat Growers
WaterAid
Waterman Logistics
Winrock International
World Food Program USA
World Vision



MV APL Islander Wiper Zakary Wailehua, JM-5363, and Junior Engineer Mark Reyes, JM-5427, showing off one of five mahi-mahis caught that day.



MFOW Electrician Alex Plaza, #3876, puts on the finishing touches of a computer upgrade job in the Seattle dispatch office.

HONOLULU NOTES

In March we dispatched our monthly average of 62 billets, 50 of them being standby jobs. The C-seniority members are starting to feel the pinch with less standby jobs, and it will only get worse as the LSMR ships start rolling from FOS to ROS in a years' time. Presently, the Honolulu registration list has 21 A-, five B-, and 13 C-seniority members.

I attended the Honolulu Port Council monthly board meeting and the AFL-CIO Executive Borad meeting in March.

At the end of the month Lauri Harlan, John Harlan's wife, and family flew in to lay John to rest. We, along with Jeffrey Baumgarten, returned to Kua-loa Beach Park where just about a half a year ago John and his family came to say farewell to his parents. They scattered the parents' ashes with flowers floating out to sea. It was a bittersweet day with having a lot of sea stories and

just remembering John and how he was such a good guy; from when Lauri and John meet as high school sweethearts to John and our own Moses Bell sailing together in the Navy; to how most of us know John from shipping with him; to how John just finished building his and Lauri's retirement dream home. I can see John in his son and daughter and the two grand kids who enjoyed hearing the stories but missed his presence. Some of his ashes was left at home in Alaska where a tree is now growing, some of it left here at the beach with his parents, and the rest will be taken by the Manoa for a well-deserved sea burial.

Aloha,

Mario Higa, Port Agent

Regular membership meeting dates 2024

May	1	S. F. Headquarters
	7	Honolulu
	8	Wilmington
June	5	S. F. Headquarters
	12	Honolulu
	12	Wilmington
July	3	S. F. Headquarters
	9	Honolulu
	10	Wilmington
August	7	S. F. Headquarters
	13	Honolulu
	14	Wilmington
September	4	S. F. Headquarters
	10	Honolulu
	11	Wilmington
October	2	S. F. Headquarters
	8	Honolulu
	9	Wilmington
November	6	S. F. Headquarters
	12	Honolulu
	13	Wilmington
December	4	S. F. Headquarters
	10	Honolulu
	11	Wilmington

POLITICAL ACTION FUND

Voluntary donations for March 2024:
Jacob Sperling, P-2640.. \$20.00
Anthony Zariello, JM-5329\$10.00
Stuart Melendy, #3671\$10.00
Gregory Dziubinski, P-2675\$50.00
Ivy "Cajun" Callais, #3592\$100.00
Jack Knutson, JM-4032\$20.00
Edgardo Guzman, #3905\$100.00

SEATTLE NOTES

During the month of March Seattle shipped one ERO, one Oiler, eight Standby Reefers, and seven Standby Wipers. Seattle currently has 10 A-, six B-, and six C-seniority members registered for shipping.

The CV *Kamokuiki* called for a full gang to be dispatched for a 60-day max trip to end in lay-up at Malaysia. I had to dispatch early to accommodate sign-on physical availability at Kaiser.

If you are made aware of minor or developing health issues at your union annual physical or by your general practitioner, be sure to follow up with the prescribed advice. If not, you may go to your next sign-on only to find you lost a job over something you could have addressed months prior.

A big thanks to MFOW member Alex Plaza. He put in many hours of voluntary overtime rebuilding the Seat-

tle Hall computer and transferring files over to the new hard drive. He saved us hundreds of dollars on the purchase of a new computer, and I may get another 10 years out of the existing one from the upgrades he did. After watching him do the job I'm glad I know nothing about computers. I'm perfectly content being a tech dummy and I wouldn't want to get wrangled into that job.

Fraternally,
Brendon Bohannon,
Representative

HONOR ROLL

Voluntary donation to General Treasury — March 2024:
Stuart Melendy, #3671\$15.00
Eric White, #3925\$100.00
Eliseo Ramiscal, #3932.....\$100.00

MFOW members pensioned

Name	Book Number	Pension Type	Sea Time	Effective
Maurice Baptiste	JM-5175	SIU PD Only Deferred Vested	7.00	4/1/2024
John Farley	3772	SIU PD Only Deferred Vested	13.00	4/1/2024

MARINE FIREMAN SUBSCRIPTIONS, AND VOLUNTARY PAF DONATIONS

Please use the following form.

NAME (Print) _____ PENSION or BOOK NO. _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Check box: U.S. & POSSESSIONS OVERSEAS
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HOWZ SHIPPING?

March 2024 San Francisco

Electrician.....	1
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	3
Junior Engineer	1
Wiper	2
Standby Electrician/Reefer	15
Standby Wiper	6
TOTAL	28

Wilmington

Electrician.....	2
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer.....	1
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	4
Junior Engineer	1
Oiler	3
Wiper	4
Shore Mechanic.....	15
Standby Electrician/Reefer	21
Standby Wiper	30
TOTAL	81

Seattle

Electrician/Reefer/Oiler.....	1
Oiler	1
Standby Electrician/Reefer	8
Standby Wiper	7
TOTAL	17

Honolulu

Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer.....	2
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	2
Junior Engineer	3
Oiler	1
Wiper	1
Shore Mechanic.....	3
Standby Electrician/Reefer	24
Standby Wiper	26
TOTAL	62