MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"

M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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MTD, AMP TROUBLED OVER EXTENSION OF JONES ACT WAIVER

The Maritime Trades Department (MTD) and the American Maritime Partnership (AMP) expressed unease over the Administration's decision late last week to extend the ongoing Jones Act waiver through February 14, 2027, warning that the prolonged suspension continues to undermine American maritime interests.

Both organizations call for an end to the waiver, citing the damage to U.S.-flag operators, American mariners, domestic shipbuilding and investment in the U.S. fleet. They further insist that any remaining exemptions be subjected to strict scrutiny and limited to genuine military necessity, rather than allowing foreign vessels and crews to displace American ships and workers in domestic commerce.

MTD Statement

The Maritime Trades Department is deeply concerned by the Administration's decision to extend the Jones Act waiver for a third time, now through February 14, 2027. What began on March 17 as a 60-day emergency measure will have run nearly eleven months, the longest suspension of the Jones Act in its 106-year history. The record is clear. The waiver has not lowered prices at the pump: published analyses put its largest possible effect at less than half a cent per gallon. What it has done is hand roughly 90 million barrels of American cargo to foreign-owned, foreign-crewed ships. More than a quarter of reported waiver voyages involved vessels or companies tied to China, meanwhile investment in American vessels and shipyards is on hold, and gas stays at record highs.

The MTD calls for an immediate end to the waiver and urges the Administration to properly enforce its proposed strict case-by-case review of waiver vessels. Only voyages that meet the statutory standard of military necessity, and for which no American vessel is available, should be approved during this waiver period. The MTD also urges the Administration to hold foreign operators accountable to mandatory federal reporting and tax, immigration and employment requirements, including the bar on D-1 visa crews in domestic commerce.

We share the Administration's goal of restoring American maritime dominance. That goal starts with American ships, built in American yards and crewed by American mariners. It is well past time to end the waiver and protect American jobs.

AMP Statement

AMP calls for a prompt end to the waiver and looks forward to working with the Administration to advance our shared goal of restoring American maritime dominance by unleashing investment in rebuilding and growing the U.S. domestic fleet. Meanwhile, we urge the Administration to continue scrutinizing all waiver requests under the case-by-case process to ensure that any approved waivers meet the statutory standard of military necessity and are not used to displace American vessels and American workers for routine commercial moves. As both the Administration and Congress have made clear, a Jones Act waiver does not relieve users of the responsibility to comply with applicable U.S. laws, including tax, immigration and employment standards.

To learn more about the waiver's impact visit https://www.americanmaritimepartnership.com/jones-act-waiver-hurts-america

DUES MUST BE CURRENT FOR VOTE TO COUNT IN UPCOMING ONLINE REFERENDUM

Members should make sure their dues are current so that they can participate in December's District-wide Online Referendum. Members have until midnight on December 16th to be current on their dues for their vote to count. As the M.E.B.A. By-Laws state, "No member's ballot shall be counted unless [he/she] is in good standing as of 15 days immediately preceding the closing of the balloting." The By-Laws state that no member shall be entitled to any benefits of the Union or be considered in good standing unless his or her dues are paid in full for the current calendar quarter or paid in accordance with the dues check-off (DCO) system. In addition, when members who pay by DCO take vacation or (in the case of the Government fleet) Leave without Pay (LWOP), there are lapses in payroll where dues aren't automatically submitted.

The online referendum will run from December 1 to 31. Developed by the Constitutional Committee in response to Norfolk Resolution No. 26-03-01, the Referendum proposes to amend the M.E.B.A. By-Laws to establish a new procedure for remote voting on contracts presented at regular monthly membership meetings. The proposal is intended to provide additional voting opportunities for members working aboard contracted vessels, while introducing a new set of procedures for administering those votes.

If passed, eligibility requirements, registration deadlines, vessel movements and the logistics of participating from shipboard will all factor into how the process works in practice. The amendment also places responsibility on the DEC to review individual circumstances and address the technical arrangements necessary to facilitate participation. Given the variety of vessels, operating schedules and onboard conditions involved, putting a consistent process into practice will require considerable coordination. Members should take the time to review the proposed language and consider how these procedures would work in the day-to-day realities of administering contract votes throughout the District. You can click **HERE** to review the proposal and supporting documents.

If approved by a majority of ballots cast - and confirmed by the Tallying Committee which will be elected in January 2027 - the amendment would be incorporated into the By-Laws and implemented. If it fails, the matter would return to the DEC to determine how to proceed.

REFERENDUM WILL BE SENT TO MEMBERS AT EMAILS ON FILE

As mentioned, M.E.B.A. members will have the opportunity to vote on the By-Laws Referendum being conducted from December 1 - 31, 2026. Each member will receive their individualized ballot link on December 1 at their email address that is on file with M.E.B.A. Headquarters. The election is open only to Members – not Applicants or Pensioners. Members without functional email addresses on record with HQ will still be able to vote – but the process will be slightly more protracted.

The membership is always urged to keep Headquarters apprised of their most current contact information. You can visit the M.E.B.A. website, click on "For Members" and "Documents & Forms" to find the M.E.B.A. Database Update (Change of Address) form (3rd from top) or click **HERE** to go directly. You can also update information by contacting M.E.B.A.'s Membership Department at membership@mebaunion.org. Members are urged to make sure their personal (not work) email address is on file with the M.E.B.A.

AUTONOMOUS GREAT LAKES SAILDRONES WILL RETURN NEXT YEAR

The six unmanned Saildrone vessels that patrolled the Great Lakes from April through November will return in spring 2027 for another round of testing, the U.S. Coast Guard announced. The additional deployment is part of a service-wide effort to evaluate how autonomous technology can strengthen Coast Guard missions and assist personnel.

The 33-foot Saildrone Voyager vessels were pulled from the water last week ahead of forecasted winter icing conditions. Powered primarily by wind and solar energy, with an auxiliary 4 kW electric motor, the vessels provided Coast Guard command centers and boat stations with real-time offshore weather and wave data, along with operational insight across thousands of square miles of open water. Equipped with marine radar, AIS transceivers, meteorological instruments and optical cameras, the vessels supported weather forecasting for search and rescue, maritime traffic monitoring, navigation safety and fisheries enforcement. They are remotely piloted around the clock by human operators and serve as force multipliers, allowing Coast Guard cutters, boats and aircraft to remain available for higher-priority missions. The Coast Guard emphasized that the cameras capture only periodic still photographs, not continuous video, and do not use facial recognition or target, track or process recreational boat hull numbers. The spring 2027 evaluation will build on this year's deployment as the service continues exploring the role of autonomous systems in its operations.

THE LOWDOWN ON THE THROWDOWNS:
YOUR GUIDE TO THE M.E.B.A. HOLIDAY HOOPLA

In the mood for tea and crumpets, cucumber sandwiches and a few Shirley Temples? Naah! We didn't think so! The ships are in, the sea bags are packed away, and a shipload of mariners are back on dry land looking to loosen their collars and throw down! Some wise soul once said, "When I read about the evils of drinking, I gave up reading." Work be damned, it's time to bust loose and make merry. Here's your port-by-port guide to the mayhem – M.E.B.A. style:

The **Houston** hall fires the opening salvo on **Thursday, December 3**, with a Texas-sized holiday hullabaloo at the M.E.B.A. Union Hall. The engines fire up at 1700, and the crew will keep the good times rolling until 2200 for five hours of food, fun and full-throttle festivities. Everything really is bigger in Texas! The **Portland, Maine** hall takes the party baton on **Friday, December 4,** as the crew descends upon the Port Hole Restaurant and Pub (20 Custom House Wharf). From 1800 to 2100, the Maine-iacs will be lifting spirits, hoisting glasses and raising a little maritime mischief. **POID** party

power is also cleared for take-off on **Friday, December 4,** as our shoreside unit taxis over to the Sonesta Nashville Airport for an afternoon-to-evening celebration. High-flying holiday hijinks take place from 1600 to 2100 at 600 Marriott Drive in Nashville, TN. Fasten your seatbelts and prepare for departure with five hours of seasonal turbulence.

The **Boston** hall gets its Christmas boilers stoked on **Monday, December 7**, immediately following the membership meeting (probably around 1200). The Beantown bunch will swap Union business for holiday merriment and turn the hall into a festive floating free-for-all. All hands on deck as they raise the roof with uncharted yule-tide revelry. **Seattle** will also be getting in on the action with Pacific Northwest port-side pandemonium at the Fife Union Hall. It'll light off on **Monday, December 7** after the early (1100) membership meeting. Prepare for mariners, mistletoe and mayhem, with the holiday tempest scheduled from 1300 to 1600. Batten down the hatches!

Charleston goes full throttle on **Tuesday, December 8**, when the crew makes its way to Holy City Brewing (1021 Aragon Avenue, North Charleston). Festivities kick off at 1700, and the party is expected to generate enough holiday heat to make the harbor waters steam. Grog, grub and good company - they'll be firing on all cylinders. There are no "great shakes" on the Great Lakes as **Cleveland** is sitting this one out. But they'll be mustering around Cheryl's never-ending *cookie tray* - a veritable smorgasbord of sugary splendor. **New Orleans** lets the good times roll on **Wednesday, December 9**, when the Crescent City crew wraps up its membership meeting and gets down to some holiday deck-shaking shenanigans. The Cajuns will be ragin' at 1430 when the fête gets underway. Laissez les bons temps rouler!

Jacksonville launches its own bow-to-stern blowout on **Wednesday, December 9**, at Pat's/Shores Lounge (4870 Highway Avenue) after the membership meeting. The festivities run from 1400 to 1700, with a three-hour tour of food, friendship and festive frivolity. No lifeboats required, but a hearty appetite is strongly recommended! **Los Angeles (San Pedro)** takes the party offshore - well, at least aboard a historic vessel - as they rock the docks after the membership meeting on **Thursday, December 10**. The crew will storm the decks of the S.S. LANE VICTORY (2400 S. Miner Street, Berth 52, San Pedro) from 1400 to 1600 for some salty mariner mischief. The high seas hullabaloo is guaranteed to be seaworthy!

New York/New Jersey brings Big Apple-sized energy on **Thursday, December 10**, when the Jersey City hall becomes a launching pad for a salty dog social and holiday pandemonium. The festivities begin at 1400 after the membership meeting, and the crew is expected to go full steam ahead. There'll be no slow orders, no course corrections and no need to ask permission from the bridge to have a good time! **Tampa** is ready to make waves after the membership meeting on **Thursday, December 10,** as the Sunshine State contingent heads to The Bad Monkey Ybor (1717 E. 7th Avenue). It's anchors aweigh at 1500 and they steam along until 1800. The gang will unleash a tropical tidal wave of holiday hoopla and paint the town blue and gold.

The **Norfolk** hall membership meeting unfolds into a full-force, free-form fiesta of fun on **Thursday, December 10**. It'll be hopping at Froggie's restaurant where they'll be ready to ribbit from 1500 to 1900 (3656 Shore Drive in Virginia Beach) with fair winds and festive spirits. **Oakland** launches their seafarer's soirée and brings a West Coast holiday ruckus on **Friday, December 11**, when the Union Hall becomes ground zero for a spirited explosion of merriment. The crew casts off for chaos from 1230 to 1600, giving members plenty of time to unmoor during the shore leave stampede.

Honolulu brings the island flavor on **Thursday, December 17**, when the hall hosts its Big Kahuna holiday luau. The fun starts at 1000 and runs until 1400. Expect a heaping helping of aloha, muumuu-size merrymaking and enough hoʻolauleʻa to make a seasoned sea dog break out a grass skirt. Mahalo and bottoms up! **Baltimore** joins the **December 17** tripleheader with a daytime blowout at the M.E.B.A. Union Hall. From 1300 to 1700, Charm City will be overflowing with holiday cheer and enough shipmate shenanigans to keep the harbor buzzing. Four hours of unrestrained celebrating should be just about enough to get everyone properly calibrated. And finally, **M.E.B.A. Headquarters & the American Maritime Congress** host a high-altitude holiday hootenanny on the HQ rooftop on that same **Thursday, December 17**. The shindig shoves off at 1700 and continues until 2100. Statisticians from the Guinness Book of World Records will be on hand to verify whether longstanding records for partying will be surpassed that day.

The coast-to-coast flotilla of holiday festivities will harbor enough food, fun and frivolity to keep the M.E.B.A. family merrily sailing along through the season. So, don't be tardy for the party, Marty! Stop on by. Catch up with old shipmates, meet new friends and raise a glass to those who can't attend. Be safe!!! And make it a joyful holiday season!

TOYS FOR TOTS DONATIONS AT BOSTON, TAMPA HALLS

M.E.B.A. Union Halls in Tampa and Boston are spreading holiday cheer by serving as drop-off locations for the Marine Corps' Toys for Tots program. Members, their families and the local maritime community are encouraged to join in by donating new, unwrapped toys to help make Christmas a little brighter for children in need.

The Tampa Union Hall, located at 2018 East 7th Ave., Tampa, FL 33605, is collecting donations through Wednesday, December 2. For questions or additional information, contact Tampa Branch Agent Nicole Greenway at ngreenway@mebaunion.org or call the hall at 813-247-7223 for Nicole or Dispatcher Robinson Thelismond.

In Boston, Representative Sam Berner is coordinating the effort at the M.E.B.A. hall, located at 12 Channel Street, Suite 606, Boston, MA 02210. Members can bring an unwrapped toy to the hall when it hosts its holiday party on Monday, December 7, or drop one off beforehand.

Toys for Tots collects and distributes toys to less fortunate children, helping ensure they have a gift to open on Christmas morning. Every donation, big or small, can make a difference for a child. M.E.B.A. members have always looked out for their own, but this is a great opportunity to extend that spirit of generosity to children and families in our communities. Help put a few more smiles under the Christmas tree this year!

APPLICANTS SEEKING MEMBERSHIP SHOULD IMMEDIATELY FORWARD QUALIFYING DOCS TO HQ

Qualified applicants trying to make membership in December must make sure they provide Headquarters with required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next District Investigating Committee (DIC) report. The DIC meets twice a year to review applicants for membership and will issue a report in late November to be voted upon by members during the regular December membership meetings (December 7-11).

To make membership, an applicant needs the required sailing days or specified years of employment with a particular bargaining unit, must be current with service charges and must complete other necessary requirements which may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

Applicants should know that they are responsible for providing their local Union hall/Headquarters with the documentation demonstrating their fulfillment of the application requirements. Once they submit the requisite amount of sea time (or documented years of service) to Headquarters and have otherwise fulfilled the needed requirements as stated in the application packet they signed, they may be eligible for membership. Applicants who have fulfilled the necessary requirements should forward their information to Headquarters. Applicants have been mailed letters from HQ referencing the missing requirements needed for that applicant to make membership. Referenced documents must be submitted to HQ before the DIC finalizes their report at the end of November if the applicant wishes to be considered for membership during this review period.

If you have questions about your status, you can contact the Membership Department at membership@mebaunion.org All questions about service charge payments should be directed to the M.E.B.A. Accounting Department at accounting@mebaunion.org. Qualified applicants who fail to make the deadline will have to wait another six months – until the June 2026 report – to make membership.

NEXT MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*
Monday, December 7 – **Boston**@1200; **Seattle (Fife)**@*1100*.
Tuesday, December 8 – **CMES**@1430; **Charleston**@1400; **Houston**@1315; **Oakland**@1230; **Portland, Maine**@1200.
Wednesday, December 9 – **Jacksonville**@1300; **New Orleans**@1315; **Online HQ "Town Hall" Meeting@**1300 **(No Voting) – Register by emailing** mebahq@mebaunion.org
Thursday, December 10 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@**1230; **NY/NJ@**1300; **Norfolk@**1300; **Tampa@**1300.
Friday, December 11 – **Honolulu**@1100

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



M.E.B.A. does not tolerate assault, or harassment of any kind.
If you see something, say something – The M.E.B.A. Emergency Hotline can be reached at 1-888-519-0018.

The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated track record of readiness, safety, and loyalty in answering America's call to action in times of both peace and war is unrivaled in the world. M.E.B.A. HQ – Phone: (202) 638-5355; mebahq@mebaunion.org. Website: www.mebaunion.org For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – marco@mebaunion.org Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram. The Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School can be contacted at (410) 822-9600 or mebaschool.org. M.E.B.A. Plans is at (410) 547-9111 or www.mebaplans.org