



West Coast Sailors

Official Organ of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

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Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Fees, Bribes, Scams, Threats and Debt: Report Shows World Seafarers Widely Exploited

A new research report finds that seafarers are routinely encountering exploitation in the form of illegal fees, demands for bribes, and other scams in their scramble for jobs in the commercial shipping industry. It emerges that many seafarers are forced to pay recruitment fees to secure opportunities, with the abuses most prevalent in countries with high rates of unemployment and often being ignored by shipping companies.

The research study by the Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) and Sustainable Shipping Initiative (SSI) finds that for a majority of seafarers, the violation of their rights and welfare begins at the recruitment office where at least two-thirds are forced to pay recruitment fees to secure a job. The effect, according to the Seafarers and Recruitment Fees research, is significant levels of debt leading to forced labor conditions. They report that the practices are most common in Asia and Africa where people are least able to avoid and report these schemes.

IHRB and SSI surveyed almost 5,000 seafarers between Sep-

tember 2022 and February 2023 finding that over two-thirds (70 percent) of seafarers have experienced violations of their workers' rights. Most of them reported being charged recruitment fees, an illegal practice affecting seafarers around the world. For the unsuspecting jobseekers, the fees are brandished as necessary to cover costs including the recruitment itself, travel, visa and administrative costs, and often other unspecified "fees" and "service charges" but often end up in the pockets of the agents and brokers.

Notably, of those who experienced illegal charging of recruitment fees, the large majority (71 percent) did not report it, in most cases because they didn't know where to report such abuses. Of those reporting being charged recruitment fees, 45 percent were officers, 16 percent were cadets, and 39 percent were ratings.

The research contends that manning agents and brokers in countries where desperate unemployed jobseekers would do anything to secure jobs in ocean going vessels have turned recruitment processes into money-making schemes not only by charging recruitment fees but also by scamming applicants with fake job offers. Over a quarter, 27 percent of respondents, reported paying recruitment fees for job offers that turned out to be fake.

The illegal practice is prevalent in India and Nigeria where 36 percent and 15 percent respectively of jobseekers were forced to pay recruitment fees. Other countries where the practice is common are Ukraine, the Philippines, Ghana, Pakistan, Romania, Croatia, and Bangladesh.

Though the refusal to pay the recruitment fees meant no contract for jobseekers, 44 percent of those who had refused to pay reported being blackmailed by the manning agents. The most commonly cited tactic is threats by the manning agents to spread negative references to other

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Iran Seizes Third Tanker U.S. Increases Security in Gulf

Iran seized a Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman in international waters, the U.S. Navy said, the latest in a series of seizures. Less than a week later a second Panamanian flagged tanker was swarmed, boarded and seized. A third ship followed that. All are believed to be held in Iranian ports.

The Chevron-chartered, Marshall Island registered tanker Advantage Sweet was boarded by Iranian troops from helicopters in the Gulf of Oman. Iran is alleging that the tanker failed to stop after being involved in a fatal collision with a fishing boat in the Persian Gulf. Other reports emerged soon afterward tying the seizure to a little followed U.S. effort to seize an Iranian oil cargo aboard a Greek-managed tanker. At the same time, the U.S. Congress is pressing the Biden administration to increase seizures of Iranian oil and take a more active role in protecting the Middle East from the growing Iranian threat to

maritime interests.

In February and March 2023, Reuters and the Associated Press reported that the United States was in court seeking to seize an oil cargo aboard another Marshall Islands registered tanker the Suez Rajan, managed by Empire Navigation. Court filings, AP reported, suggest that the tanker had approximately one million barrels of Iranian crude and was possibly heading to China. Families of the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States filed in court in March seeking the seizure of the oil as part of their judgment against Iran for \$3 billion in compensation.

Citing three people briefed on the current situation, the Financial Times reported that "US authorities ordered a tanker of Iranian crude oil to redirect towards the US in recent days." They are linking yesterday's seizure as retaliation for the U.S.'s actions, but the disposition of the Suez

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Case Artist: Hawaii Congressman Blames Water Safety on Jones Act

As night follows day, disaster brings Jones Act enemies swimming to the surface. This time it's the bulk fuel oil spill and water contamination at the Navy's Red Hill fuel storage facility in Pearl Harbor, defueling part of the cleanup.

Long-time detractor of the Jones Act, U.S. Congressman Ed Case (D-HI), unsurprisingly called for an advance waiver to both the military cargo preference requirements and to the Jones Act, claiming that it will save money and expedite the Department of Defense's (DoD) defueling mission.

In a letter to U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas, Case emphasized the need for

waivers to "assure full, dependable, and cost-effective availability" of the ten oceangoing fuel tankers required under the DoD's proposed plan.

According to the plan, a little more than two million barrels of fuel stored in the Red Hill tanks must be removed and distributed to other storage facilities under a plan supervised by the Environmental Protection Agency and Hawaii Department of Health. The use of ten tankers to ship the fuel from a pier at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam to various points.

Case said that the complex plan must achieve

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Biden Supply Chain Envoy Optimistic on Longshore Contract

Negotiations have gone on for a year, and there have been many stops and starts, but now a tentative agreement covering longshore workers at the largest US ports is within reach, according to a Biden administration official involved in the talks.

Stephen Lyons, the White House's supply chain envoy, who was in Los Angeles last week and is involved in the negotiations, expressed optimism. "The reflections I'm getting from both sides are positive, meaning we should see tentative agreements soon," Lyons, a retired Army general and former head of TRANSCOM, said on May 11.

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union and the Pacific Maritime Association, which represents ocean carriers and terminal operators at 29 ports from California to Washington

State, have been working without a contract since the last one expired on July 1, 2022.

Disruptions at the Port of Los Angeles and Port of Long Beach are not an issue now, and the PMA and the ILWU's Local 13 chapter have agreed on manning requirements for cargo handling equipment at certain terminals, the Journal of Commerce reported. An agreement on the use of automated machinery at cargo terminals was reached in April, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

Reaching agreement on these thorny issues has allowed the ILWU and PMA, who are negotiating in San Francisco, to move on to other topics, including wages and pensions. Provisions of the emerging agreement are unclear, as is how long

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SUP Honor Roll

Voluntary contributions from the membership to the following funds:

Dues-Paying Pensioners

- Diane Ferrari.....BK#2251
- Hannu Kurppa BK #3162
- Gunnar Lundeborg.....BK#4090
- Vince O'Halloran.....BK#2463
- James ClayBK#4794
- Alexander Earle..... BK#1885
- Paul PuruggananBK#3880
- Mike Worth BK #3629
- Terrence LaneBK#4107
- Duane NashBK#2437

Political Fund

- William Williamson \$100
- Dave Connolly\$200
- Jeffrey Baccay \$50
- Chris Bartolo.....\$50
- Archie Bickford..... \$100
- Dave Hampton \$20
- Robert Leeper \$150
- Geoffrey Knight \$100
- Erling Eastmark \$30
- Raymond Tavai..... \$10
- Ernesto Lagramada..... \$100
- Vince O'Halloran.....\$200
- Mikiele Kauhi.....\$50

Organization/General Fund

- Ron Reed.....\$50

West Coast Sailors

None

SUP Meetings 2023

These are the dates for the regularly scheduled 2023 SUP meetings:

SUP HQ	SUP Branches	October 9*	October 17
June 13*	June 20*	November 14*	November 20
July 10	July 17	December 11	December 18
August 14	August 21	*Denotes Tuesday meeting due to holiday	
September 11	September 18		

SUP Sailor

and former Wilmington Branch Agent Duane Nash Turns 95



Present and former SUP and MFOW agents gathered among many others to celebrate the 95th birthday of Duane Nash, in the foreground. Behind him are Leo Martinez, Keith Miller, Mark Hurley, Bob Bugarin and Lucy Bishop in San Pedro California.

Membership and Ratings Committee

The Committee met on May 4, 2023 and found the following members eligible for advancement in seniority and rating stamps in the various departments.

Name and Membership	Number	Seatime	Rating	Seniority
Jesselo Unabia	B-19752	1 yr.	A.B.	B
Lois Black, Jr.	B-19753	1 yr.	O.S	B
Tyler Thompson	C-2974	30 days	A.B.	C
Orlin Garcia	C-2975	30 days	A.B.	C
Sanoë Waters-Lambert	C-2976	30 days	O.S.	C
Carey Floyd	C-2977	30 days	A.B.	C

Ratings: Bosun Stamp

- Jose Duran Bk#2763
- Jonathon Anderson-Kaisa Bk#3189

Membership and Ratings Committee's Report: Phil Coulter, 4824, Michael Pellom, B-19750 and Ron Reed, 3188.



Membership and Ratings Committee: Michael Pellom, Ron Reed, and Phil Coulter at SUP HQ on May 4, 2023.

SUP Pensioner Join the Ranks of Retirement

Kelly B. Johnson Bk#4327 May 8, 2023

SUP Welfare Plan Notes

Unfit For Duty

You must have doctor's documentation of your Unfit-For-Duty status sent to the SUP Welfare Plan if you incur an illness or injury that prevents you from being able to work. Because of Privacy Laws, shipping companies will not automatically send information to the Plan Office if you are injured on a ship. You must request that the shipping company do so.

We do not require extensive medical information, lab reports, x-rays, or doctor notes. The documentation submitted should indicate the date you initially became Unfit-For-Duty, the dates you will be unable to work, your likely return to work date, and the dates you have seen the doctor. Follow-up documentation should be sent periodically, approximately every two months, if you remain unable to work for an extended period of time.

Fit-For-Duty documentation is additionally required when you are able to return to work. Modified activity is still considered Unfit- For-Duty.

With respect to the SIU Pacific District Pension Plan, under certain circumstances time spent absent from work due to illness or injuries which disable you for at least 90 continuous days may be credited as covered employment up to a maximum of 200 days per year (600 days maximum) provided:

a. The illness began within 180 days of your most recent day of covered employment, or

b. The injury occurred in the course of (and arose out of) covered employment. Periods of disability absence between your last day of active covered employment and your retirement date will not be counted as days of covered employment under this provision.

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Seafarers Medical Center 415-392-3611

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Final Departures

Yutaka Kuwatani, Book No.3166. Born in California in 1931. Joined SUP in 1981. Died in Santa Rosa, California, April 24, 2023. (Pensioner)

Workers Memorial Day Marks Those Who Died on the Job

More than 5,000 U.S. workers died on the job in 2021, according to new statistics released by the AFL-CIO on April 28th known as Workers' Memorial Day.

In a statement Wednesday after the labor group released its annual "Death on the Job" report, AFL-CIO president Liz Shuler said that "every American should be alarmed and outraged by the tragic data unearthed in this report." The number of fatalities among Black workers was at its highest point in nearly two decades.

"It is unconscionable that in the wealthiest nation in the world, Black and Latino workers are facing the highest on-the-job fatality rates in nearly two decades," Shuler said. "This report is more than a wake-up call, it is a call to action. No one should have to risk their lives for their livelihoods. There is no corporate cost-benefit analysis that should put human life and worker safety on the wrong side of the ledger."

The AFL-CIO's new report on worker death and safety data — the 32nd such report it has released — noted that fewer workers have died in the 50-plus years since the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, thanks to "significant progress toward improving working conditions and protecting workers."

Even so, there's more to be done, the labor federation said: Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) pen-

alties are too weak and its resources are too few, while unions are under threat. Just in 2021, 5,190 U.S. workers were killed on the job, with a job fatality rate of 3.6 deaths per 100,000 workers. The fatality rate was even higher for Black workers at 4 deaths per 100,000 people, up from 3.5 in 2020 and at its highest level in "more than a decade," according to the report. The number of Black workers who died on the job — 653 — was also the highest in at least 19 years, the AFL-CIO said.

Latino workers — who are at the greatest

'Every worker accounted for in this report is a person who just went to work one day and never came home.'

— AFL-CIO president Liz Shuler

risk for workplace fatalities, perhaps due to their overrepresentation in dangerous industries — also died at a disproportionately high rate in 2021, with 4.5 deaths per 100,000 workers in 2021, according to the report. That's 25% higher than the national average, the AFL-CIO said. Meanwhile, the number of Latino workers who died hit 1,130 in 2021, up slightly from 1,072 deaths in 2020. The majority of those who died were immigrants.

"It is our solemn responsibility to these workers to do everything in our power to

honor their memories by making America's workplaces safer — because that's what unions do," she added. "It is our history, it is our responsibility and it is our cause to always put workers and their safety first."

The deadliest industries for workers continued to be agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; transportation and warehousing; mining, quarrying, and oil-and-gas extraction; construction; and wholesale trade. Workers' Memorial Day commemorates the formation of OSHA in 1971.

[Notably, workers of color are often overrepresented in those occupations. About 45% of workers in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations are Latino, as are approximately 51% of construction laborers, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In contrast, Latino workers make up 18.5% of employed people over the age of 16 in the U.S. Black people, who make

up 12.6% of the labor force, account for 20.3% of workers in transportation and material-moving occupations. Transportation incidents were the leading cause of workplace fatalities in 2021, accounting for 1,982 deaths. What's more, as job fatality rates have declined in other dangerous industries like construction and agriculture since 1992, the fatality rate for workers in transportation and warehousing has managed to increase by 12%, reaching 14.5 deaths per 100,000 workers, the AFL-CIO said.]

An estimated 120,000 workers, meanwhile, died of occupational diseases in the U.S. in 2021, and employers reported some 3.2 million work-related injuries or illnesses, the report said. But due to "widespread" underreporting, the AFL-CIO said, the number of work-related injuries and illnesses in the private sector may be closer to 5.4 million to 8.1 million annually.

Fall From Ladder Results In Pilot Death In Japan

The Japan Coast Guard is investigating the death of a marine pilot during a pilot transfer to a cruise ship off the port of Nagasaki last week.

On the morning of May 5, the cruise ship Diamond Princess was headed into Nagasaki and awaiting the pilot. At about 0530 the pilot boat approached and the pilot transferred to the ladder to board the ship. For reasons that are still under investigation, the pilot fell into the water while climbing the ladder.

Diamond Princess' crew deployed a rescue boat and launched a search for the pilot. He was wearing a life jacket and was recovered from the water, but was unconscious, and was pronounced dead two hours later. Japanese media have identified the pilot as Yoshihiro Osuga, 69. He was an experienced pilot with 15 years in the trade.



Surface conditions were calm at the time, and the Japan Coast Guard is looking into the possibility that the pilot boat's motion may have been a causal factor.

The climb from a moving pilot boat up the side of a moving ship involves risk, and pilot ladder accidents are not uncommon. Every year, marine pilots suffer falls into the water or onto the deck of the pilot boat, and all too often these casualties are fatal. In 2020, the Sandy Hook Pilots Association lost two of its members to pilot ladder falls in less than a year, illustrating the danger.

Rail Unions Win Paid Sick Days

In a surprise move welcomed by workers, U.S. freight rail companies have recently granted paid sick days to almost half their workforce.

The Guardian and other news outlets reported that after being roundly criticized for not offering paid sick days, BNSF, CSX, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific have granted many of their 93,000 workers four paid sick days a year through labor negotiations, with an option of taking three more paid sick days from personal days.

"We've made a lot of progress," said Greg Regan, president of the Transportation Trades Department of the AFL-CIO, the main U.S. labor federation. "The rail companies miscalculated about how the public would see their huge profits and the

stories of how hard rail workers' lives were and not having sick days and the draconian policies they were operating under."

For years, freight rail workers weren't allowed to call in sick the morning of their shift. They could, however, get approval weeks in advance to take paid personal days.

The White House has taken some credit for the advances on paid sick days. When the first deals were announced, the press secretary, Karine Jean-Pierre, said the deals follow "continued advocacy and involvement from the Biden administration".

After CSX led the way, Senator Bernie Sanders, independent of Vermont, and Senator Mike Braun, Republican of Indiana, called on other railroads to grant paid sick days.

World's Lowest Paid Mariners Get a Raise

The inland crew of riverine watercraft in Bangladesh's are without question the world's worst paid mariners. Until recently, deckhands and cooks on Bangladeshi riverboats earned as little as \$95 a month. That amount is low even by local standards in Bangladesh, far below the median national salary of \$245. Thanks to a recent win by the ITF, the ITF-affiliated union Bangladesh Noujan Shramik Federation (BNSF) has won a pay increase of 60 percent, lifting almost 200,000 people up towards a livable wage.

According to ITF, riverboat crewmembers in Bangladesh have been fighting for better pay for years. When the Bangladeshi government ended a longstanding practice of coupling automatic pay raises for boatmen with pay raises for state employees, wages stagnated for the 200,000 waterway workers (known locally as naujan) who ply the nation's navigable rivers.

Under the hard-won agreement, ordinary seamen, cooks and cleaning staff on vessels on the country's main waterways will see their wages rise to \$175 per month. The most senior captains on

the waterways will now earn about \$395 a month. "For some crew, their wages will have nearly doubled from this time last year," said Ashiqul Alam Chowdhury, general secretary of the BNSF. The new deal also includes seniority pay, a substantial housing allowance, better medical care, and backdated pay raises to November 2022.

The victory is a major win, but it is still far short of what BNSF would like for its members. "We have shown through our strike action how our work is critical to the economic life of Bangladesh. Without naujan, nothing moves in our country. We are the beating heart of Bangladesh," said Chowdhury.

BNSF last went on strike in 2020 when it staged an action to demand food allowances for riverine vessel crew, as required by the Maritime Labor Convention (MLC). After a three-day strike shut down the 5,000 freighters operated by the Bangladesh Cargo Vessel Owners' Association, the shipowners agreed to abide by the MLC and provide a meal allowance for vessels without a shipboard cook.

TRANSCOM General Visits Watkins in New Jersey



The crew aboard U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command ship *USNS Watkins* (T-AKR 315) had the honor of welcoming aboard U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) Commander Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost on a visit to Bayonne Drydock & Repair Corp in New Jersey. "It takes an outstanding team to project and sustain our Joint warfighters across vast distances at such tremendous volumes. The *USNS Watkins*' crew is just that," the four-star general said. The *Watkins* is crewed on deck by members of the SUP.

Labor of Love: Hawaii Unions Repair Middle School

On April 15, the Hawaii State AFL-CIO and Labor Community Services Program held their annual Labor of Love event after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. The Labor of Love program donates skilled trades and volunteer time to refurbish a Title 1 public school each year. The maintenance and repair projects that would take years to fund and finish are completed in a single day. This year, more than 300 volunteers from 23 unions and teachers, staff, students, businesses, and community partners converged to volunteer at Dole Intermediate School on a wide

range of projects.

Representing SUP and doing the work was Honolulu Branch Agent Patrick Weisbarth and Brandon Keopuhiwa and their families.

Hawaii State AFL-CIO President Randy Perreira (AFSCME) said: "At a time when our community is facing ever-increasing costs and new challenges, Hawaii's labor unions remain committed to fighting to raise living conditions and improve the quality of life for all citizens. Our Labor of Love project is where all unions bring their talents and resources together to improve a school in need. Today our union

members proudly demonstrate that labor unions in Hawaii are more relevant than ever as we showcase our skills and commitment as valuable members of our local community."

When students returned to school, they found new benches, lunch picnic tables, fresh paint on portions of their campus, new AC units, a laundry room for those who do not have regular access to wash their clothes, a new courtyard area outside of the cafeteria, and an updated bathroom. The estimated value of the contribution to Dole Intermediate School is \$80,000.



Patrick Weisbarth, Ikena Weisbarth, Brandon Keopuhiwa, and Kaleianapauole Keopuhiwa after a day of volunteer maintenance at Dole Middle School.

UFCW Opposes Giant Supermarket Merger Deal

The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union has emerged against the planned merger between grocers Kroger and Albertsons, adding to tensions over the \$20 billion supermarket deal.

UFCW, the biggest U.S. union representing grocery workers, is concerned about what President Marc Perrone said was a lack of information provided by the companies about the merger, including on potential store divestitures. The Union is also concerned about the viability of stores that could be sold and whether buyers might be saddled with heavy debt loads, he said. "We are not getting any definite assurances right now," Mr. Perrone said. UFCW Local 5 and other California based UFCW locals have opposed the merger for months.

Kroger said it is working with regulators on store divestitures to ensure that any divested locations are sold to qualified operators with appropriate management experience and financial stability. The company said it wouldn't close any stores, distribution centers as part of the deal, or lay off front-line workers from stores that might need to be divested for regulatory approval. But putting a store up for sale could be

another way of closing it if no qualifying buyers emerge.

Kroger said it would continue to discuss with the UFCW the merger's benefits and the divestiture plan. Albertsons said it has a history of creating jobs and working with the union, and that the merger will create a more competitive alternative to large, nonunion retailers.

The union, which represents about 350,000 Kroger and Albertsons workers, expects to discuss with state-level officials how the merger could affect state operations. Bay Area based Local 5 joined with members and representatives from UFCW Locals 7, 324, 770, 400 and 3000 in Washington D.C. in November to voice their opposition to the proposed Kroger and Albertson's merger and to attend a congressional hearing on its potential impacts on workers and consumers. The six locals represent more than 100,000 Kroger and Albertsons workers.

Local 324 member Judy Wood, a 34-year Albertsons employee, said workers were told by management that "there was nothing to worry about" when Albertsons and Safeway merged, but many ended up losing their jobs when another grocery chain acquired dozens of locations that were spun off by the

newly merged company, and then filed for bankruptcy.

Strategic Programs Director Jim Araby led the Local 5 delegation to the Capital and called on the Federal Trade Commission to kill the proposed deal.

"If the merger is allowed to move forward the only winners will be private equity millionaires and other wealthy shareholders. Displaced union workers lose as their stores close, and consumers lose when less competition results in higher prices," said Araby.

Kroger, the biggest U.S. supermarket operator by sales, struck a deal to acquire Albertsons in October. Executives said that combining the number-one and number-two U.S. grocery-store companies would help them boost their scale, although they also estimated they would have to sell up 650 stores to get regulatory approval. Competition against larger rivals such as Amazon.com and Walmart they cited as the driving force of merger. Executives said \$1 billion in wages and benefits were invested as part of the merger, in addition to spending \$500 million on price cuts for shoppers and \$1.3 billion on improving stores. But how that breaks down and to what effect is open to speculation. The merger has also drawn opposition from some elected officials, independent retailers and suppliers, who have warned about

the deal's potential impact on food prices and workers' jobs.

UFCW has been working with external experts to help assess the potential impact of the deal on workers and communities, especially whether the companies intend to sell stores to buyers who would recognize existing agreements between the UFCW, Kroger and Albertsons. Both companies together operate nearly 5,000 stores and employ more than 710,000 employees, with more than 50 manufacturing plants and nearly 70 distribution facilities.

FTC review includes interviews of grocery retailers and wholesalers of varying sizes across the U.S., inquiring about business models and those companies' view of the proposed Kroger-Albertsons deal. Officials have inquired about online operations, supermarkets' pharmacy businesses and grocery-store labor dynamics, areas they traditionally hadn't explored during past supermarket-deal reviews.

Antitrust lawyers have said that regulators are likely to factor in union groups' views on how the deal would affect the industry, competition and prices. Under the Biden administration, they said, workers have gained more prominence as regulators have looked more closely at how mergers affect workplace issues such as wages and compensation.

Biden Supply Chain Envoy Optimistic on Longshore Contract

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any new contract will be in effect.

Some importers and retailers have diverted cargo away from West Coast ports since contract negotiations began last May, worried about potential supply chain disruptions caused by labor actions or lockouts.

Once a tentative agreement is reached, the proposed contract must be ratified by the membership. Bloomberg report-

ed business community concern about whether the ILWU membership would finalize a deal, even with a tentative agreement in place.

The Retail Industry Leaders Association, whose members include Home Depot Inc., Target Corp. and Best Buy Co., said some businesses will keep some or all of their cargo away from the West Coast ports until a contract has been ratified.

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agencies.

It adds that not only is it prohibited to charge recruitment fees for a job under the Maritime Labor Convention but the subsequent debt burden on seafarers can be a significant factor in the risk of forced labor. Respondents also reported experiencing corruption onboard ships, in education/training, promotion, and medical checks.

"To minimize the risk of forced labor among seafarers, the shipping industry and its customers must work collectively to tackle this issue of illegal recruitment fees being charged to seafarers and seek an industry-wide shift to the 'Employer Pays Principle' whereby no worker is paying the costs of their own recruitment," states the study.

According to the study, banning the charging of recruitment fees to workers is a key way that companies can ensure better working conditions for seafarers. To end the illegal practice of seafarers being charged recruitment fees, the study is

recommending that shipping companies must ensure that seafarers employed on board their ships have not been charged recruitment fees to secure their work contracts.

Other measures include the need for port authorities to investigate any reports of the charging of recruitment fees and for governments to ensure that manning agencies do not charge fees for jobs by enacting and enforcing penalties for such practices. Customers of shipping companies, including charterers, commodity companies and traders, and container cargo owners, the report's authors contend must also carry out human rights due diligence in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Apart from greater awareness of the illegality of recruitment fees, there is a need for effective mechanisms to penalize offending agencies and for a remedy for seafarers who have paid illegal recruitment fees. Seafarers also need to know how and where to report such practices



Off Pier 45 in San Francisco, the *President Eisenhower* is inbound from sea for Oakland International Container Terminal with SUP crew on deck.

Shultz Fails Labor's Lie Detector Test in Senate Testimony

By Audrey Edmonds

In March, Starbucks founder and former CEO Howard Shultz testified in front of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee.

He was subpoenaed to answer for his flagrant and illegal union-busting, and this is a big deal because it's the first time Congress has held a hearing on this topic in decades.

Howard Schultz isn't only testifying on behalf of himself and Starbucks. He's there to speak for every corporation and executive who think they can get away with breaking federal labor law because they have money and power.

Here are the top three lies Shultz told the HELP Committee:

Lie #1:

"We are innocent because we have done everything to respect the law of our partners' right to form a union."

Seven Starbucks workers were illegally fired for organizing and were only reinstated after the National Labor Relations Board forced the company to reinstate them.

Lie #2:

"We would never take benefits away from anyone involved in joining a union."

Starbucks has cut hours, refused salary increases and benefits, fired workers and even closed stores in response to organizers' attempts to unionize. Workers who are organizing have been shut out of student loan repayment programs, COVID-19 ben-

efits, health care benefits and credit card tips. Employees still don't have access to benefits granted to non-union partners.

Lie #3:

Schultz said that Starbucks management didn't

show up to the bargaining table because organizers refused to bargain in person.

The truth? Starbucks management has refused to show up to their in-person bargaining session dozens of times.

As one organizer explained, "I was at six separate bargaining tables, in person, and every single time Howard's people walked away within minutes. Minutes."

There's absolutely no excuse for putting billions of dollars of profits over employees who are simply trying to come together to exercise their legal rights.

Audrey Edmonds writes on labor law for the AFL-CIO at aflcio.org



Writers Strike Slams Big Hollywood Media

The Writers Guild of America, which represents 11,500 screenwriters, went on strike this month after contract negotiations with studios, streaming services and networks failed. Companies blamed the union in the news media, and striking writers celebrated the disruption of shows filming from finished scripts. A protracted strike seems likely, perhaps more than three months which would be long enough to affect the Emmy Awards, scheduled for Sept. 18, and delay the fall TV season.

The W.G.A. has vowed to stay on strike for as long as it takes. "The week has shown, I think, just how committed and fervent writers' feelings are about all of

this," Chris Keyser, a chair of the W.G.A. negotiating committee, said in an interview on Friday. "They're going to stay out until something changes because they can't afford not to." Scheduling talks have been difficult and non-productive, signaling both wide disparity in goals and delays ahead. Some industry observers suggest the strike could last more than 100 days.

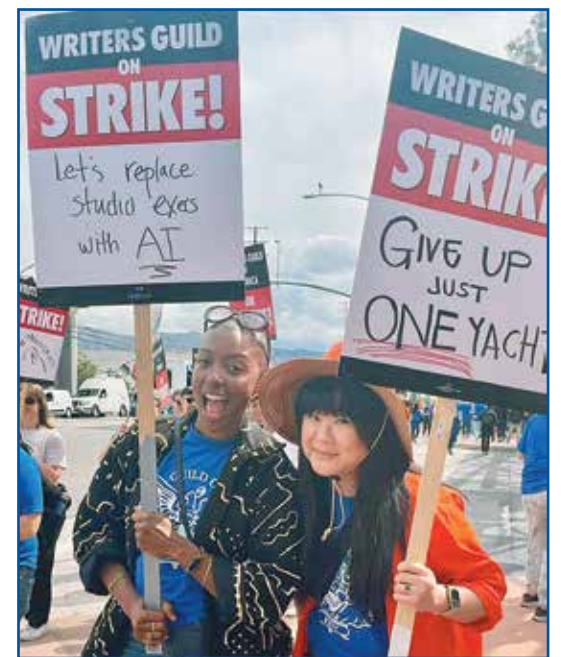
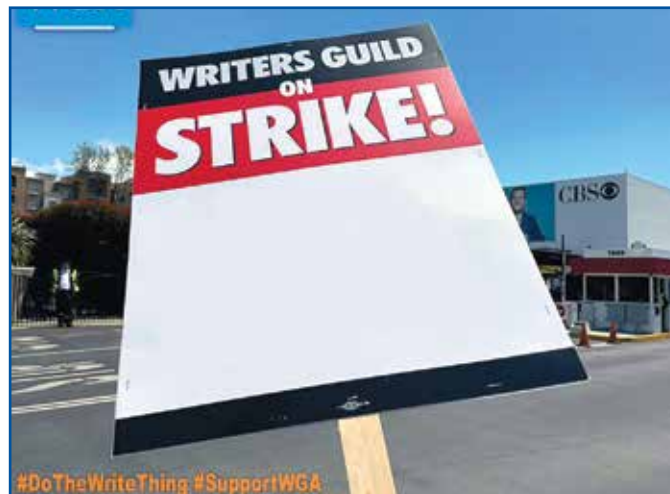
The AFL-CIO said that "While studio and streaming company profits have remained high and spending on content has grown, writers are falling behind." It is a familiar managerial maneuver to use the onset of new technology to cut wage security. "The companies have used the transition to streaming to cut writer pay

and separate writing from production, worsening working conditions for writers at all levels," said the federation.

The last time the WGA went on strike was in 2007, when streaming was a nascent technology. It was a major point of contention in negotiations, because every time distribution technology changes, writers have had to strike to make sure they're fairly compensated. The very first WGA strike in 1960 resulted in writers getting a share of profits when a movie was aired on TV, while a 1973 strike focused in part on the emerging market of cable. The 1980s saw fights over home video.

In remarks before a White

House screening of the Disney+ series American Born Chinese, Biden told the audience that included cast, producers, and executives that "I sincerely hope the writers strike in Hollywood gets resolved and the writers are given a fair deal that they deserve as soon as possible." He called the industry iconic and said that "we need the writers and all the workers and everyone involved to tell the stories of our nation, the stories of all of us," drawing cheers and applause from the crowd in the East Room.



Skywest Caught Trying to Fly Under Union Radar

Skywest Airlines is Union busting with a charter subsidiary SkyWest Charter (SWC) as alleged by the Air Line Pilots Association International (ALPA) in a letter to US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg.

In the April 26 letter, the pilot union described SWC as an attempt by SkyWest to substitute Essential Air Service (EAS) flying with an "alter-ego charter subsidiary operating essentially as a scheduled operation, but at a lesser level of safety". "The airline seeks to shift its flying under [federal] safety regulations to its own surrogate that will operate the same aircraft but under public charter rules and [different] safety regulations, with fewer seats and less experienced and qualified first officers." It accused SkyWest of attempting to "roll back the clock and skirt aviation safety rules that have led to a 99.8% reduction in airline passenger fatalities in the United States".

Responding in a separate letter to Buttigieg on April 27, SkyWest President Russel "Chip" Childs rejected ALPA's concerns as "thinly veiled attempts under the cloak of safety" to bar market entry by SWC, "a well-capitalized, exception-

ally well-equipped, non-ALPA operator". He reiterated that SWC "more than satisfies the statutory and regulatory requirements applied by the Department [of Transportation] in determining an air carrier's fitness under applicable law".

The background to the dispute is that the regional capacity provider plans to migrate around twenty CRJ200s to its new charter subsidiary. The aircraft are to be retrofitted with 30 seats, which means they will fall under FAR Part 135 regulations with lower pilot hour requirements - just 500 hours compared to the mandatory 1,500 hours for Part 121 scheduled operations. SkyWest already holds Part 135 authority but has applied for commuter air carrier authority.

The plan is SkyWest's answer to a crippling shortage of experienced captains amongst regional carriers in the US. The crisis was caused by mainline carriers having headhunted those in the left-hand seat as travel rebounded after the pandemic, themselves having granted early retirement to pilots to cut costs during Covid-19. According to the Regional Airline Association (RAA), US mainline car-

riers hired around 13,000 pilots in 2022, most from their regional counterparts. While 9,500 pilots qualified last year, the backfill was insufficient to keep up with demand, nor did it address the shortage of captains at the regional level.

ALPA President Jason Ambrosi reminded Buttigieg of his repeated promises that first officer qualifications would not be weakened under this administra-

tion's watch. "But the SkyWest proposal will do just that by gutting the rule under which regional pilots — already among the most junior, least-experienced commercial aviators — gain entry to the national airline system," Ambrosi said.

Founded in 1931, ALPA is the largest airline pilot union in the world and represents more than 69,000 pilots at 39 U.S. and Canadian airlines.

CMA-CGM Buys Another Logistics Firm

French shipping group CMA CGM has committed to buy the logistics operations of family-run conglomerate Bollre for an enterprise value of 5 billion euros (\$5.5 billion).

CMA CGM granted the Bollre group an option to sell it the logistics business, which generated more than 7 billion euros in revenue last year and employs 13,500 people. Bollre said it would decide after consulting employee representatives.

Buying Bollre's second biggest business would allow cash-rich CMA-CGM to bolster its door-to-door transport services and supply chain management.

The company said the deal would make it a top five player in global logistics and has been on an acquisition spree after making big profits during the pandemic,

Bollre said the deal price would amount to 4.65 billion euros before calculating debt and cash on completion date.

CMA CGM, privately controlled by the founding Saade family, has seen its earnings surge in the past two years on high freight rates and saturated supply chains.

It has used the profits to support an investment in Air France-KLM, among other things especially across the logistics business.

One Dose Vaccine will be Main Covid Shot in U.S.

First time vaccines for COVID-19 for Americans will get one, the updated shot that targets both the Omicron variant and the original strain of the virus, according to federal health officials.

In late April the Food and Drug Administration also authorized a second booster of the updated shots for people at high risk of Covid-19, specifically people 65 years and older or people who have weak immune systems.

These two actions are latest adjustment to Covid-19 vaccine policy. There may be additional efforts to simplify the complicated vaccination regime, probably by a once-a-year shot schedule along the lines of flu vaccine.

"The agency believes that this approach will help encourage future vaccination," said Dr. Peter Marks, head of the FDA's division that oversees vaccines. "Covid-19 continues to be a very real risk for many people, and we encourage

individuals to consider staying current with vaccination."

The agency said a second booster is authorized for people 65 and older whose last booster was more than four months prior, and for immunocompromised people whose last shot was more than two months prior, with additional doses as recommended by their doctors.

Relatively few people are getting vaccinated against Covid-19 for the first time, while some of those at high risk have been getting a second updated booster even though it hasn't been cleared for such use. The changes will make a difference, however, for people seeking their first Covid-19 vaccination going forward. They will only need to get a single dose, instead of the two doses currently recommended.

The moves may also result in more high risk people, who have been waiting for an official signoff on a second shot,

getting boosters.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended the new vaccination scheme and second booster, especially for the elderly and immune-compromised. The mRNA-based Covid-19 vaccines from Pfizer Inc. and its partner BioNTech SE and from Moderna Inc. have been around since December 2020.

Reformulated versions targeting the Omicron strain and the original strain were first released last September but only as boosters. Health officials and many doctors and scientists have encouraged people to get the updated boosters to better protect against Omicron, the dominant strain of the virus in the U.S. They say people at high risk need more frequent boosting to bolster their immune defenses.

"Boosting the severely immunocompromised and anyone over 60 at least every six months is warranted even during times of less prevalence" of Covid-19, said Dr. Jeremy Faust, an emergency physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital and an instructor at Harvard Medical School. He is co-authoring a study that examined the medical records of Israelis who received a booster to assess their risk of later getting severe Covid-19.

A study in Italy, published in February in the medical journal *Eurosurveillance*, found that a second dual-target booster

from Pfizer and BioNTech offered stronger protection to people 60 years and older who weren't previously infected with Covid-19 or whose last infection was more than six months prior.

Some high-risk patients have asked for additional boosters and managed to get them without FDA's authorization, according to doctors.

Yet uptake of the updated shots has been limited overall. Some 17% of the U.S. population received a dual-targeted or bivalent booster, compared with 70% who got the full series of initial shots, according to the CDC.

First-time vaccine recipients have also slowed. About 9,000 people a day are getting their first Covid-19 vaccine doses this month, according to the CDC, down from more than a million at this time two years ago.

The FDA's latest moves don't affect less popular Covid-19 vaccines from Johnson & Johnson and Novavax Inc. that target only the original strain of the virus. They will remain available, though older versions of Pfizer-BioNTech's and Moderna's shots won't, the agency said.

Children under age 5 who get the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and children under age 6 who receive Moderna's will still need multiple doses of the vaccines to be considered fully vaccinated, agency officials said.

COVID Pandemic Officially Ends

The U.S. federal public health emergency officially ended on May 11, 2023.

The end of the emergency designation comes just weeks after the World Health Organization declared an end to the global health emergency. Despite the notice, the nation's leading health officials warned Americans that the official declaration for the end of Covid-19 concerns does not remove it as a threat to public health.

"This does not mean it's over. This is just a new phase of managing it," Dr. Becky Smith, infectious disease specialist and director of Duke Health News, said. "The ability to make the transition out of the public health emergency phase signals a lot of successes in vaccine development, immunity, and effective therapeutics."

For millions of Americans, it's been over for months at least. The Covid-19 emergency, comprised of a set of disorienting of lockdowns, mandates, anxiety, and exhaustion came to a muted end during the past couple of years, brought about by vaccines and antiviral drugs. The expiration of the federal public health emergency on Thursday was a barely noticed formality.

The virus still affects many, and kills hundreds of Americans every day, according to the latest government

statistics. Dr. Peter Chin-Hong of the University of California at San Francisco said it's important for people to stay up to date on vaccinations and boosters and to test for COVID if necessary. Coverage of those tools will remain in effect for the next six months.

But the end of the emergency means that at-home COVID tests will no longer be issued free by the government and may not be covered by insurance. There will be less flexibility with tele-health options and some specialized COVID sick leave programs are shutting

"This is all going to be a little bit unsettling over time but hopefully not in the short term, immediate level," Chin-Hong said. "The big take-home point is that people shouldn't be worried about paying for paxlovid or paying for vaccines at this moment. There's plenty of drug, there's plenty of supply, so please stay up to date on your vaccines. And if you get infected and you're vulnerable, make sure that you know you have access to paxlovid."

People continue to get sick from COVID, with the new arcturis subvariant making its presence felt in the Bay Area. Infection from the new subvariant quickly rose from 2% in early April to over 12% now, data shows. Chin-Hong says those who haven't received the latest booster since it came out should get one, especially people 65 or older and at least 4 months removed from their last booster. For more see vaccine story above.



The flag of convenience shadow fleet tanker *Pablo* burning off Malaysia after delivering a load of Iranian crude to China.

Shadow Fleet Fallout: Tanker Fire Off Malaysia

A ship known to trade in Iranian oil, particularly to China, caught fire 37 nautical miles north of Malaysia in early May. Twenty-five crew members were rescued; three remain missing.

Due to Iranian and Russian sanctions, the so-called dark fleet continues to grow, and Southeast Asia is the crossroads of that activity. The dark fleet often hides from automatic identification systems tracker, designed to promote safety at sea, and conducts risky ship-to-ship oil transfers on the high seas. Some analysts put the fleet numbers at around 600 ships and have tied them to accidents around the world.

The 1997-built *Pablo* has changed hands three times in the last couple of years. The ship, registered in Gabon, is a popular flag of choice for sanctions-busting companies. It is listed as being owned by Marshall Islands-based Pablo Union Shipping, a single ship shell company.

The ship was in ballast from China to the United Arab Emirates when the blaze broke out. Widely available voyage data indicate the ship moved Iranian oil in 2022.

In October last year the Djibouti-registered Young Yong ran aground off the Riau Islands in Indonesia, a ship which had been sanctioned by the US for its alleged links to Iran. As Russia with Iran and Venezuela need tonnage to move cargo, they are often using older ships as the sanctions take hold. The major class societies such as DNV and ABS, ship managers, and marine insurers are turning away from their former clients in Moscow. The many risks of substandard tonnage are well known and include poor fire suppression and control systems mandated by world port state control standards such as the Paris MOU. Trading with China, where *Pablo* last called before the fire broke out, can make escaping the standards easy.



A Chinese shipbuilder — Yangzijiang Shipbuilding — has delivered the world's largest containership in terms of TEU carrying capacity. The *MSC Irina* was delivered March 9 to MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company. The ship can load 24,346 twenty-foot containers or the equivalent (TEUs). There are at least three other ships in the 24,000 TEU class. Yangzijiang Shipbuilding is located in Jingjiang city on the Yangtze River. There are six more on order for MSC from the shipyard. Photo courtesy Yangzijiang Shipbuilding

Persian Gulf Maritime Security to Rely on USV's

U.S. military and diplomats are negotiating with Middle East allies to add dozens more robot vessels around the Arabian Peninsula. The drones are to be deployed in the hope of improved threat detection from countries like Iran and is part of an attempt to protect waterways vital to global commerce and oil trade.

The US, which leads two international maritime coalitions out of Bahrain, has proposed more than 100 unmanned surface vessels (USV's) in operation by the end of the summer, Vice Admiral Brad Cooper, who commands the coalition and the Bahrain-based Fifth Fleet, said. An initial target of 50 was met in February and the technology delivers a cost-effective and efficient way of deepening US partnerships, he said.

The plan is being carried out as Iran, emboldened by a China-brokered deal to re-establish relations with US ally Saudi Arabia, seized a second tanker in a week of remarkably aggressive actions against merchant shipping. The US Navy

released footage of a swarm of fast boats it said were owned by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps surrounding the Panama-flagged oil tanker Niovi as it sailed through the Strait of Hormuz, between Iran and Oman.

The US is also working to offset China's efforts to expand military and security ties with Gulf Arab states, who have historically relied on the US for defense needs. China, the largest trading partner for most of those countries and the top buyer of crude oil from the region, already has a naval base in Djibouti in the Horn of Africa.

In March, China held joint naval drills with Iran and Russia in the Gulf Oman. But the U.S. military was not impressed: "You can't compare a rudimentary exercise to the broad sophisticated integration with large partners that we are leading here," said Cooper, referring to those drills. He described a US-led maritime exercise earlier this year as the largest in the region, involving 42 countries, 7,000

people, and 35 ships.

At the coalition's Bahrain naval base, Captain Colin Corridan, commander of Task Force 59 which is responsible for deploying the new Unmanned Surface Vessels, said a lot of the footage and information collected from the sea robots is synthesized by artificial intelligence to ease the burden on humans. The USVs are made by Canadian, Israeli and US companies, among others, and cost from \$800,000 to \$3 million. They range in size from slow-moving solar-powered buoys to large unmanned speed boats.

"They are just eyes on the water constantly sending signals," said Corridan.

Lieutenant Commander Jorge Lens from the Spanish navy and a member of Corridan's task force says some unmanned vessels can stay out for months



without the need to refuel and resupply — the record is 220 days in the Red Sea. Only Bahrain and Kuwait have publicly announced plans to buy USVs, according to Commander Tim Hawkins, a spokesperson for US and coalition naval forces in Bahrain. The Iran tanker seizures are precisely why the "more enhanced visibility" provided by USVs is critical to regional security and stability, he said in emailed comments.

Iran Swarms and Seizes Three Tankers in Persian Gulf

continued from page 1
Rajan is unclear.

A video purportedly from Iran TV was widely available on the internet of the assault on the Advantage Sweet, shot from a circling helicopter. Commandos are shown lowering themselves on ropes to the deck of the Advantage Sweet before the vessel was commandeered. Advantage Tankers sent a brief statement to Agence France Presse saying the vessel was being escorted to Iranian waters "on the basis of an international dispute." They said there are 24 crewmembers aboard, Indian citizens, while Chevron which had chartered the vessel said it is working with the owners.

Meanwhile, the reports of the retaliatory seizure came as U.S. senators sent a letter to the White House calling for support and funding of the Treasury Department's Office of Asset Forfeiture. The report cites a letter arguing that the Biden administration policies have prevented seizures of Iranian oil shipments for more than a year. The seizures began in 2019 nearly \$228 million worth of Iranian oil has been seized, Reuters reported.

Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate yesterday also introduced a bill, the Maritime Architecture and Response to International Terrorism in the Middle East Act (MARITIME) that calls on the Department of Defense to develop a strategy with Middle East partners and allies to counter maritime threats from Iran and others. The legislation highlights the threats from manned and unmanned

naval systems, such as the recently reported drone and missile assaults on merchant ships. The legislators are calling for the development of a strategy and to study the possibility of facilitating an increased maritime awareness and interdiction capabilities to expand on the existing operations in the region.

"The MARITIME Act will help the United States and its Middle East partners work together to counter sea-based threats from erratic actors like Iran, transnational criminals, and terrorist extremists," said Congresswoman Ann Wagner of Missouri who serves as Vice Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and is one of the sponsors of the bill. Companion legislation was also introduced in the U.S. Senate.

Less than a week later, the U.S. Navy reported that the Panama-flagged VLCC Niovi was seized on May 3 by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy. The tanker was in ballast, i.e., not carrying oil at the time, and had departed from Dubai and was headed to the port of Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates. According to the U.S. Navy, a dozen IRGCN fast-attack craft swarmed the NIOVI mid-strait, forcing the crew to change course and head towards Iranian territorial waters.

"Iran's actions are contrary to international law and disruptive to regional security and stability," the U.S. Navy said in a statement.

"Iran's continued harassment of vessels and interference with navigational rights in regional waters are unwarranted, irresponsible and a present threat to maritime security and the global economy."

Iranian state reported Iranian control of a Panama-flagged product tanker Purity also seized underway in the Persian Gulf. The 15-year old tanker was reportedly directed into the Asaluyeh anchorage in Southern Iran and its AIS signal confirms it has been in the port since May 9.

As the West Coast Sailors goes to press, news of a third tanker seizure arrived in mid-May.

The U.S. military is working with allies to send more ships and aircraft to the Middle East as Iran escalates its seizures of merchant tankers, the National Security Council announced in the aftermath.



This still image from video released by the U.S. Navy shows the Panama-flagged oil tanker Niovi surrounded by Iranian Revolutionary Guard vessels in the Strait of Hormuz Wednesday, May 3, 2023. Iran seized a Panama-flagged oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz, the second-such capture by Tehran in recent days. (U.S. Navy via AP)

"Today, the Department of Defense will be making a series of moves to bolster our defensive posture in the Arabian Gulf," said NSC spokesperson John Kirby. The government of Iran has "no justification for these actions," Kirby added. The U.S. he said "will not allow foreign or regional powers to jeopardize freedom of navigation in the Middle East waterways, including the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab al-Mandab."



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STATEMENT SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF
 AMERICAN MARITIME OFFICERS
 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF MASTERS, MATES & PILOTS
 MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION
 MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION
 MARITIME TRADES DEPARTMENT, AFL-CIO
 SAILORS' UNION OF THE PACIFIC
 SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION
 TRANSPORTATION TRADES DEPARTMENT, AFL-CIO
 TO THE
 SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION
 OF THE
 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
 ON

**“Assessing the Shortage of United States Mariners and
 Recruitment and Retention in the United States Coast Guard”**

May 11, 2023

Chairman Webster, Ranking Member Carbajal and Members of the Subcommittee:

We submit this statement on behalf of the American Maritime Officers, International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association, Marine Firemen's Union, Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, Seafarers International Union, Sailors' Union of the Pacific, and Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO in conjunction with the Subcommittee's hearing on *“Assessing the Shortage of United States Mariners.”* We ask that our statement be included in the hearing record. Together, our maritime labor unions represent the vast majority of United States Coast Guard (USCG) licensed and unlicensed American maritime personnel who work aboard commercial vessels of all types and who are among the most highly trained and qualified mariners in the worldwide maritime industry.

Our unions and the licensed and unlicensed American merchant mariners we represent have never turned away from the challenges that must be faced to preserve the democratic way of life at home and overseas. As they did at the founding of our nation, during World War II and in every conflict before and since, the men and women of the United States-flag merchant marine stand ready to sail into harm's way whenever and wherever needed by our country to enhance America's military and economic interests and to support and supply our armed forces deployed overseas.

It is critically important that our government and the American people understand that without the U.S.-flag vessels and U.S. citizen licensed and unlicensed merchant mariners ready and available to provide the commercial sealift readiness capability needed by the Department of Defense, our nation would be forced to entrust the support, supply, and security of American forces deployed overseas to foreign flag vessels and foreign crews who may not support U.S. defense operations and objectives. It goes without saying that doing so would jeopardize the lives of American servicewomen and men who will no longer be guaranteed the supplies and equipment they need to do their job in support of our country.

As stated by Maritime Administrator Admiral Ann Phillips in 2022: *“As a retired U.S. Navy Rear Admiral with more than 30 years of service, I know the critical importance of our merchant marine to our national defense as well as to our economy. Particularly in a contested environment, it is American mariners who will answer the call — as they always have — to move the supplies we need to defeat any adversary.”*

Similarly, then-United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) Commander General Stephen Lyons stated in November 2020, *“With 85 percent of our forces based in the continental United States, nearly 90 percent of our military equipment is expected to deploy via sealift in a major conflict. In order to deploy those forces, we require safe, reliable and ready U.S.-flagged vessels [and], mariners to crew those ships...”*

It is therefore imperative that the downward trend in the number of vessels operating under the U.S.-flag must be stopped and reversed, and the American maritime manpower shortage must be addressed and resolved. Simply put, the current manpower shortage is a national security threat, and it is clear that the Department of Defense cannot do its job if private industry is unable to provide the civilian American merchant mariners DOD needs. This requires strong, positive action by the Congress and the Administration to support and fund existing programs that support the operation of U.S.-flag vessels, including the Maritime Security Program, the Tanker Security Program, and the Jones Act; to eliminate statutory and regulatory impediments to the growth of the maritime manpower pool; and to propose and implement innovative and effective programs and policies that will increase the number of commercially viable U.S.-flag vessels, increase the number of American maritime jobs, and increase the amount of America's foreign trade carried aboard U.S.-flag ships. Simply put, more cargo means more U.S.-flag ships, and more U.S.-flag ships means more American mariners!

Consequently, we recommend the following so that we can begin to achieve these objectives:

First, we encourage Congress and the Administration to develop a realistic maritime strategy that includes at its core a national cargo policy that increases the percentage of America's foreign trade carried aboard U.S.-flag commercial vessels and ensures that American mariners have jobs during peacetime. The treatment of U.S.-flag vessel operations and American mariners under the tax code should encourage rather than discourage the utilization of U.S.-flag vessels and American mariners, and bilateral and multilateral trade agreements should reflect the strategic importance to our nation of a stronger, more active U.S.-flag fleet in the carriage of America's exports and imports. Today, with the ongoing efforts by the Chinese Communist Party to secure domination over the world's oceans and international trade as well as the proliferation of state-owned and controlled and foreign flag of convenience vessel operations, including partial ownership in many security sensitive foreign ports, we have seen the U.S.-flag share of America's foreign trade fall to less than 2 percent. This situation threatens our security and threatens our economy, as China will only further increase its control over what cargoes move and at what cost unless we bolster our own U.S.-flag fleet and regain control over the carriage of our foreign trade.

Secondly, it is equally important that Congress continue to provide the Maritime Administration with the authority it needs to fully enforce and implement the nation's U.S.-flag cargo preference shipping requirements. All too often, Federal agencies and departments unilaterally and at times with no explanation take advantage of so-called “notwithstanding” clauses in the law or otherwise simply ignore the spirit and the letter of the law in order to waive the U.S.-flag shipping requirements and ship greater and greater shares of taxpayer financed government cargoes on foreign flag, foreign crewed vessels.

We greatly appreciate the steps this Subcommittee and Committee have taken as well as the recent efforts of Maritime Administrator Admiral Ann Phillips and her staff to achieve greater compliance by all Federal agencies with cargo preference. However, it is clear to us that further action is necessary, and we encourage Congress to restore the U.S.-flag requirements for food aid cargoes to 75 percent. In fact, since U.S.-flag cargo preference shipping requirements for food aid cargoes were arbitrarily slashed from 75% to 50% in 2012, the U.S.-flag fleet has plummeted by 26% according to the Maritime Administration - more than triple the impact initially forecast – contributing to the current maritime manpower shortage which has been exacerbated by the direct and indirect impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic on our industry. Similarly, we recommend Congress increase the U.S.-flag requirements for all other government-generated civilian cargoes to 100 percent, the same percentage that covers the shipment of defense cargoes, with U.S.-flag carriage dependent, as it is today, on the availability of U.S.-flag vessels at fair and reasonable rates. Requiring 100 percent would greatly decrease the gamesmanship of U.S. government agencies intentionally violating cargo preference statutes, and will make Marad enforcement that much easier.

We also urge Congress to eliminate those provisions in the law that enable Federal agencies and departments to bypass the authority of the Maritime Administration to determine if and when cargo preference applies and whether U.S.-flag vessels are available at fair and reasonable rates to transport the cargo. Until and unless all such authority is vested exclusively in the Maritime Administration, U.S.-flag vessels will continue to lose cargo carrying opportunities and American mariners will continue to be denied employment opportunities.

Thirdly, one of the most positive steps taken by Congress over the past few years has been the authorization of a new Tanker Security Program modeled after the highly successful Maritime Security Program. In fact, this new program has the potential of adding, over the next year or so, upwards of twenty vessels to the U.S.-flag fleet, thereby helping to address the maritime manpower shortage as new job opportunities for American mariners are made available aboard these vessels. However, an element unique to the tanker industry, commonly referred to as the “Matrix Requirements”, mandates levels of officer experience for the U.S. flag tankers engaged in transporting fuels internationally. These compliance rules stipulate that certain mariners must have minimum (1) employment time with a particular operator, (2) time serving on a particular vessel class, and (3) time serving in rank. Failure to comply with the Matrix Requirements can lead to rejection of a vessel for service, severe limitations on the vessel's ability to trade internationally, and consequential financial losses.

We are therefore urging Congress and the Administration to assist the industry in meeting these unique requirements by allowing a portion of previously appropriated unobligated funds for the Tanker Security Program to be used for mariner training. More specifically, we ask Congress to allow the Maritime Administration to provide up to \$2.5 million of funding to each of the initial 10 vessels (i.e., \$25 million) approved to enter the TSP in order to increase the number of mariners who possess the necessary tanker specific qualifications to meet the Matrix Requirements.

We also believe there are steps that Congress and the Administration can and should take to reduce and eliminate financial and other impediments to the recruitment and availability of mariners. For example:

- Congress should increase the appropriation for fuel funding for training vessels operated by State Maritime Academies in order to reduce the cost to students at the Academies for summer sea terms. This action can and should result in an increase in enrollment in training sea terms, thereby helping to grow the qualified maritime manpower pool. Currently, the cost to a student to sail on a training ship can exceed \$13,500 per year, with the majority of the sea terms cost attributable to fuel. Increasing Federal fuel funding would reduce the cost of training sea terms, thereby encouraging greater enrollment. Congress should also allow fuel subsidies to be used for State Maritime Academy owned and leased vessels that are used to provide cadets with the option of obtaining the Dedicated Duty Engineer and Mate of Towing (TOAR) license endorsements.
- We also believe Congress should increase the maximum Student Incentive Payment from \$32,000 to \$64,000 in order to increase interest and participation in the USN Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program among those attending a State Maritime Academy. This in turn will increase the number of State Maritime Academy graduates who have an obligation to sail on their license after graduation.
- We urge Congress to include U.S. merchant mariners sailing aboard U.S.-flag commercial vessels for at least 180 days per calendar year among those eligible for Public Service Loan forgiveness. Public Service Loan Forgiveness encourages individuals to enter and continue in full time public service employment by forgiving the remaining balance of their direct loans after satisfying public service and loan repayment requirements, forgiving the remaining balance of the loan after the individual has made 120 qualifying monthly payments. This program is currently available to U.S. military members and should be similarly available to those working as a merchant mariner as part of our nation's “fourth arm of defense.”
- Finally, we strongly support provisions included by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in H.R. 2741, the bipartisan Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2023. Reducing the time requirement for Able Seaman and authorizing additional funding for the Coast Guard to modernize its credentialing system are just two of the provisions that can and should help alleviate impediments to the efficient and timely availability of American mariners.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that a strong, viable, privately-owned United States-flag maritime industry serves as a critical line of defense against the total domination of the world's oceans and the carriage of international trade by those nations that do not adhere to our commitment to fair trade and open seas. From the founding of our Nation to today, American merchant mariners have served with distinction and courage, never hesitating to sail into war zones to supply and support American troops deployed anywhere in the world, and too often sacrificing their own lives for our protection. We again submit that immediate and innovative action is necessary to increase the amount of cargo carried by U.S.-flag vessels, to increase the size of the commercially viable, militarily useful U.S.-flag fleet, and to increase the maritime manpower pool ready and available to meet our nation's economic and national security requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement. We stand ready to provide whatever additional information you may require and to work with you and your colleagues to strengthen and grow our U.S.-flag merchant marine and to alleviate the maritime manpower shortage.



SUP PRESIDENT'S REPORT

GOVERNMENT MATTERS

Ready Reserve Force: As previously reported, the Ready Reserve Force contract bid process is underway. Our RRF contracts are scheduled to expire on July 26, 2024. But on January 23, the Union was notified by PCS that the successor RRF Ship Management Services request-for-proposal (RFP) No. 693JF722R000009 had been published by the Maritime Administration (MARAD) on December 21, 2022. The period of performance for the new contract, beginning in 2024, will be a base period of five years with one five-year option for a total contract period of 10 years. On March 31, 2023, MARAD amended the RFP to move the proposal submission date for interested bidders from May 3 to May 12. Work continues to secure new and existing work for members.

Surge LMSR: Back in September of 2022, and several times since then, the membership was informed that on August 23, 2022, the Military Sealift Command (MSC) published solicitation N32205-22-R-4119, for the operation and maintenance of two Bob Hope-class large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off (LMSR) vessels. The ships are the USNS Pililaau and USNS Seay.

The government expects to reposition one of the vessels in the Indian Ocean and the other in the Western Pacific. The normal operating tempo for each vessel is expected to be 92 percent in port and eight percent underway, but both are likely to be in Full Operating Status most of the time.

In September 2022 an initial proposal was delivered to Patriot Contract Services (PCS) for the purposes of the bid but then the entire process went dormant. On April 6, 2023, PCS abruptly notified the Pacific District unions of pressing need to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and appendices for submission of their Seay-Pililaau proposal to MSC. By April 12, the Pacific District unions tentatively agreed to a standard government vessel MOU and sent wage and benefit appendices based on the Wage Determination under the Service Contract Act, as published by the U.S. Department of Labor. There is no evident timeline for an award or re-bid and in either case a protest is possible. What is clear is that both the RRF and the Surge LMSR are fluid and ongoing bid contracts are ongoing and the process is fluid. Will keep the membership informed and present wages and terms once there is something dependable to vote on.

MATSON NAVIGATION

Honolulu P&R call out grievance: On request from SUP Honolulu Branch Agent Pat Weisbarth, I took up a payroll grievance related to the 4-hour minimum call back in the SUP – Matson Maintenance Agreement.

As background, the Company attempted complete elimination of the provision in 2021 bargaining, among other proposals such as manning reductions. The Negotiating Committee resisted, and in the end the call back language remained the same. A claim soon arose from non-payment and based on the specific facts of that case, the Union won Company agreement to pay. There have been other cases when it went the other way. In this latest case, Company refusal to pay for a scheduled early call or return to work seemed based in part on general objection as much as factual, and since several attempts both in Honolulu and at SUP HQ to gain payment failed, the Union formally grieved under Step 1 of Section 10 of the Offshore Agreement, the standard dispute resolution method and referenced in the Maintenance Agreement.

The Maintenance Agreement in Section 3 Hours and Section 4 Wages covers the working hours, schedule, overtime, and some work rule provisions. Specifically, overtime hours are defined in Section 3 (B) as “Any work performed after 5:00 p.m. and before 7:00 a.m. and any work performed on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays shall be payable at the rate of time and one-half...” This is critical language because it covers broadly most normal overtime situations, and it compromises blanket application of the 4-hour call back provision in every case of irregular work. The call back provision states in Section 4 (F) that “When called back to perform overtime work, a four-hour minimum will be paid before 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., or before 7:00 a.m. and after 4:00 p.m. if that is the normal scheduled workday, and a four-hour minimum will be paid on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.” Much depends on the meaning of the term “call back,” undefined in the Agreement. Historically and logically, the weighty penalty of a four-hour call back is meant to compensate for a sudden, substantially disruptive, and unscheduled return to work during scheduled off hours, with intent to offset the unexpected burden and inconvenience. An occasional necessary change to the start of the next workday due to foreseen work that is properly noticed is an early call, is not a call back, and properly accounted for as normal overtime based on a forty-hour week covered under Section 3(B).

To carefully circumscribe the conditions of payment, management agreed as follows:

1. The 4 (F) four-hour call back provision shall apply to any unscheduled work outside normal hours of the scheduled workday.
2. Because of the considerable off-duty disruption, it shall also apply to any non-consecutive work period outside of regularly scheduled hours, noticed or not.
3. Work both immediately before and after scheduled work hours, will be payable as continuous overtime under Section 3(B) at a one hour minimum and time worked.

The net result is that the four-hour call back is preserved in both its original and practical intent. The grievance was thus settled and memorialized in writing for preservation.

Standby Direct Deposits: On April 5 and in subsequent conversations, Matson management contacted the Union for authorization to begin paying casual standby

workers via direct deposit. The old payment method required checks to be printed out of the Phoenix office and mailed to Headquarters, Wilmington, Honolulu, and Seattle for distribution. Direct deposit should speed up that payment process and make it quicker and more efficient to get the payment cash in member accounts with less manual work and less chance for error.

If a standby who sails with Matson has a direct deposit bank account set up the company will use the same bank details for standby work direct deposit. If a standby does not sail or does not have a direct deposit bank account already set up with Matson, they can complete a form at dispatch and submit it to the company's Marine Pay Group. Management wants all standby pay to automatically become direct deposits unless the standby opts out and requests a paper check at the time of dispatch. When a standby receives a direct deposit, Matson's vessel payroll department will send an email notification to the local hiring hall advising which standby direct deposits have been paid, along with a PDF copy of their pay vouchers. If the standby prefers a check, the voucher and check will be mailed from Phoenix to the union hall of dispatch and postmarked within three days from the time they worked, as per the heretofore normal method. After ensuring that the existing method of payment remains an option, and clarifying that any wage attachment due to overpayments would only come after separate member authorization, we agreed to facilitate swift payment.

LNG TRAINING

On April 17, after extended discussions with our primary training provider Training Resources Limited Maritime Institute, the Union was informed that a two-day Basic LNG course would be submitted to the U.S. Coast Guard's National Maritime Center for approval in early May. Using a standard 90-day course approval window, the course will be available later this summer. At that time the training dates will be scheduled and published in the *West Coast Sailors*.

Before and during the LNG conversion of Daniel K. Inouye, its training requirements were debated with Matson management. Now, as the ship soon arrives on the U.S. West Coast, the parties reached tentative agreement on the following training terms of employment in LNG fueled ships. Essentially, all unlicensed deck department mariners, as part of the ship's crew, shall possess evidence of completion of approved or accepted training in Basic IGF Code Operations meeting the training standards of competence required by the STCW Code, specifically Section A-V/3 and Table A-V/3-1 for original or renewal of STCW Endorsement for Basic IGF Course Operations. Notably, standbys and shoreside personnel are not listed. Those terms are nothing more than what was expected and required and are laid out in the attached MOU and Mr. Chairman I recommend approval.

APL MARINE SERVICES

APL Gulf Express: As reported last month the APL Eagle will replace the APL Gulf Express in the company's Maritime Security Program-supported Jebel Ali-Bahrain Middle East Express (JMX service). The turnover will happen later this month and the Gulf Express crew will cross-deck to the Eagle.

It appears now that the Gulf Express will remain at a layberth in the Persian Gulf while the Company searches for options to continue its operation. To that end, APL President and CEO Greg Doyle, and Director of Labor Relations Michael LaBonte, informed the Union on Wednesday, April 12th about the Company desire to continue their operation of this ship under the U.S.-flag after its replacement by the APL Eagle. Unlike the APL Eagle, the ship would operate outside the Maritime Security Program (MSP) and therefore be new and unsubsidized work. The Company held a conference call with the Pacific District Unions to discuss the possible deployment on intermittent government charters, loading in East Coast ports and calling in Europe, the Company asked for a competitive agreement.



Mahimahi to the rescue: this crew got the C-9 off the Oakland dock in record time to sail for Asia to relieve a disabled foreign ship in the CLX+ service. L-R Marc Dulay, Matt Dulay, Larry Moone, Doug Boe, bosun Remoni Tufono, Justin Foster and Zain Faisal

SUP President's Report continued

The membership will recall so-called "Non-MSP" work at APL in the past, having worked in the APL Agate class and other ships from 2005 through 2014 in voyages originating on the East Coast, and several times before that in other ships and on other runs. Recalling that experience, the Company said to achieve the continued operation of the Gulf Express costs must be 15% less than the MSP ships across all Unions. Various proposals were discussed but all the Company's Unions agreed to facilitate the development of the business along the same lines as in the past.

The Pacific District Unions agreed to a tentative Memorandum of Understanding to cover the Company operation of the APL Gulf Express and potentially other Company operated non-MSP ships. Each of the Unions developed appendices covering wages, wage-related items and benefits intended to attract and retain qualified sailors. The SUP Appendix proposal is built on a wage and supplemental benefit package that is the same as MSP ships, and still meets the competitive demands via Group II eligibility for the SUP Welfare Plan. This package was delivered to APL management, but as of today's meeting there has been no response and so the proposal is pending. Will keep the membership informed.

APL Anniversary: On April 18th, APL celebrated its 175th year of continuous operation via its corporate predecessors. Known first as the Pacific Mail Steamship Company in 1848, the Company history began with a U.S. government contract to deliver the mail. Today, APL still counts the U.S. government as one of its primary cargo customers. And since it is a participant of the Maritime Security Program and beneficiary of cargo preference laws, the Company is still supported by American taxpayers. The APL of today, like all of our work, is deeply connected to American politics. Urge all hands to support the SUP Political Fund to ensure the voices of its mariner stakeholders are heard in Washington, D.C.

OAKLAND BALLPARK

Along with the ILWU, MEBA, MMP and the MFOU, the SUP has for years consistently opposed the building of major league ballpark in the Port of Oakland. The project is partly a ballpark but is also an enormous taxpayer-funded luxury real estate deal. Worse, it chips away at precious industrial use waterfront land in a rare U.S. deepwater port. A hard sell by the billionaire owner forced it through various levels of local review, but because of Oakland City politics, a lack of public funding, maritime labor opposition, and higher interest rates, among other things, the project languished. Recently, the management's duplicitous "parallel" paths of remaining rooted in Oakland as their slogan says — or departing Oakland for another city — diverged when the owners announced a land deal in Las Vegas. Having failed to gain enough local tax breaks for a billion-dollar monopoly that would disrupt and hobble port operations and expansion, the departure of the A's is a victory for mariners, the maritime industry, and the SUP.

In the wake of that departure comes an initiative by the maritime industry to reclaim a so-called Maritime Reservation Area, where 10 acres waterfront was set aside for the development of the Howard Terminal ballpark. The request is made of Oakland Port Commissioners and would remove the set-aside, re-dedicate the area for maritime purposes, especially to build expanded turning basin for ships. Consistent with the positions we have routinely taken in the past to ensure a viable deepwater port, the SUP was signatory to the letter.

HOLIDAYS

Memorial Day: All SUP Halls will be closed on Monday May 29th for Memorial Day.

Kamehameha Day: SUP Halls will be closed on Monday June 12 in observance of Kamehameha Day on June 11.

Juneteenth: SUP Halls will be closed on Monday June 19th for Juneteenth, a national holiday.

ACTION TAKEN

M/S to approve the Matson LNG MOU. Carried.

M/S to concur in the balance of the President's Report. Carried.

Dave Connolly



The SUP deck gang on the bridge of the *APL Gulf Express* in Bahrain. Left to right is Delegate Fernando Rigonan, Bosun Christian De Mesa, AB Joseph Balerite, AB Denmark Jajalla, AB Vicente Romano, and AB Abdulghafor Ahmed. The gang will "cross-deck" to the MSP replacement ship *APL Eagle* this month.

Members Step Up for Matson LNG Training



LNG class Participants from SUP Wilmington. Left to right- Jennifer Corner, David Ibarra, Julian Torre, Eric McDonald and Alan Peightal



SUP members Haz Idris, Mark Waugh, Gabe Sipin, John Pennings, and Phil Coulter gather outside the Oakland Conference Center where Matson conducted its Oakland LNG training for April. *Photo Roy Tufono*

Bezos Launches FOC Superyacht

Americans can breathe easier now knowing that Jeff Bezos should have his new superyacht in time for the summer.

The 417-foot (127-meter) *Koru* was completed and launched recently. It was built in Germany but left a shipyard in the Netherlands in April and sailed for an anchorage off the coast of Spain near Mallorca.

The *Koru's* departure from the yard is part of the sea trials prior to delivery to make sure everything is working properly. Before taking delivery, Bezos could order the return of the ship to the shipyard if everything doesn't check out. The three-masted superyacht is estimated to have cost the Amazon.com Inc. founder more than \$500 million. Bezos, 59, is the world's third-richest person with a fortune of \$126.2 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

Previously known as Y721, the ship is now registered as *Koru* and is sailing under a Cayman Islands flag. It's the largest sailing yacht afloat, according to Boat International, and one of the

biggest to be built by Alblasterdam, Netherlands-based Oceanco. An Amazon spokesperson didn't respond to a request for comment.

The superyacht's size has caused problems for Bezos and its builders. The height of its masts was originally going to force the city of Rotterdam to dismantle a historic steel bridge, De Hef, for the boat to be able to make it to the ocean. City officials initially agreed to temporarily take apart the bridge's central section, but Oceanco ended up retracting the request amid public outcry. The shipbuilder launched the yacht unfinished instead, and then towed the vessel to Rotterdam to step the masts.

The size of the sails also meant that the yacht couldn't have a helipad on board. Employing innovative thinking, Bezos and his helicopter pilot partner Lauren Sanchez will rely instead on a support boat to serve as the yacht's helipad. *Koru* is a Maori word which translates to new beginnings.



**SAILORS' UNION OF THE PACIFIC
QUARTERLY FINANCE COMMITTEE'S REPORT
FOR THE QUARTER ENDED MARCH 31, 2023**

The Quarterly Finance Committee, duly authorized to act by the regular meeting at Headquarters on April 10, 2023 hereby submits the following report:

SUMMARY OF CASH AND INVESTMENTS

GENERAL FUND	\$ 3,259,648.02
POLITICAL FUND	18,574.34
STRIKE FUND	1,293,730.99
TOTAL CASH & INVESTMENTS	\$ 4,571,953.35

GENERAL FUND

INCOME

Dues, Initiation, Assessments	\$ 127,760.00
Interest and Realized Gain (Loss)	992.61
Donations - <i>West Coast Sailors</i>	790.00
Joint Committee & Hiring Hall	177,709.76
Advertising & Promotion	65.00
Miscellaneous Income	415.00
Reimbursed Administrative Expenses	26,853.78
Contributions	960.00

TOTAL INCOME \$ 335,546.15

EXPENSE

Transportation Expense	\$ 1,687.70
Rent	22,283.23
Postage, Printing & Office	6,502.67
Telephone	5,931.62
<i>West Coast Sailors</i> Publishing Expense	20,042.48
Per Capita Taxes	19,110.00
Salaries & Payroll Taxes	271,353.90
Office Workers Pension	8,252.40
Insurance	69,212.67
Election	--
Meeting/Committee & Neg. Conference & Conv.	3,802.10
Investment Expense	2,269.04
Officials Pension	11,125.00
Subscription	719.58
Accounting	241.34
Legal	3,879.14
Advertising & Promotion	499.98
Miscellaneous	543.38
Bank Charges	132.77

TOTAL EXPENSE \$ 447,489.00

BUILDING CORPORATION

INCOME

Rents	\$ 134,633.18
Miscellaneous Income	918.59

TOTAL INCOME \$ 135,551.77

EXPENSE

Building Services & Utilities	\$ 35,986.90
General Tax Expense	25,057.42
Office Equipment	2,247.60
Repairs & Maintenance	6,430.04
Salaries & Payroll Taxes	-
Insurance	-
Accounting	-
Legal	806.00
Pension	-
Advertising & Promotion	5.00

TOTAL EXPENSE \$ 70,532.96

POLITICAL FUND

INCOME

Contributions	\$ 4,800.00
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TOTAL INCOME \$ 4,800.00

EXPENSE

Contributions	\$ 2,500.00
CA Filing Fee	50.00

TOTAL EXPENSE \$ 2,550.00

NET INCOME(LOSS)

\$ (44,674.04)

Committee: Mike Worth, Peter Leo, Faith Matas, Haz Idris, Phil Coulter, et al.

Congressman Finds New Way to Attack Jones Act

continued from page 1

not only the safe and efficient removal of the fuel but also maintain military operational tempo and readiness in Hawaii and beyond. Case's letter doesn't contemplate the long-term damage done to the diversion of work from the domestic tanker industry and the mariner pool that defines military readiness.

Under existing law, some tanker movements are subject to Jones Act requirements, which mandate that cargo between U.S. locations be transported on ships built and flagged in the U.S. Additionally, these movements are further subject to government-impelled cargo requirements for overseas movements.

Case strangely argued that Jones Act ships are both unavailable and expensive. He also said that the requirements on government-impelled cargo are administratively complicated and expensive. According to Case, assuming each committed charter availability for ten total tankers at ninety days, the total cost for all service by international shipping would be about \$36 million. Case then tried to add the cost of cargo preference requirements although the math was unclear.

Case argued that it is critical to DoD and the people of Hawaii that an advance waiver from the Jones Act and government-impelled cargo requirement be issued to provide DoD with the fullest possible range of options to contract internationally available fuel tanker transport on a predictable and cost-effective basis.

The Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Honolulu, Hawaii is a DoD 200-million gallon capacity bulk fuel storage facility located just one hundred feet over the principal aquifer for the City and County of Honolulu. In November 2021, Red Hill sustained a major leak, polluting the aquifer, sickening residents and dislocating tens of thousands of people from their homes. As a result, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, at the strong urging of Hawaii's Congressional delegation and residents, committed DoD to the safe and expedited defueling, closure of the underground tanks.

To date, over \$2 billion has been directly appropriated to the mission.

This latest Jones Act waiver request is not the first from Case. Most recently, in 2021 he re-introduced a bill to reform the Jones Act to exempt Hawaii and all noncontiguous U.S. locations from the law's requirements, blaming the Jones Act for "artificially inflating the cost of shipping goods to Hawaii."

In 2022, he called on President Biden to waive the Jones Act for oil and petroleum products from



A tunnel inside the Red Hill Underground Fuel Storage Facility at Pearl Harbor, Jan. 26, 2018. U.S. Navy Photo

mainland U.S. ports to Hawaii to facilitate the replacement of oil imports from Russia following its invasion of Ukraine.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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USNS Sisler — John Relajo, delegate. Ship recently completed successful sea trials after yard period in New Jersey. Ship is currently in Virginia, preparing to load ship in Blount Island, FL. Jon Clark, bosun.

USNS Dahl — Ian Serra, delegate. Ship has returned from the Philippine's for military exercises. Union looking into restriction to ship while in Philippines. Xerxes Cunanan, bosun.

USNS Watkins — Jose Cervantes delegate. Ship is in the yard for 60 days, small RAV crew working hard. Vance Dickensen, bosun.

Cape T's and V's — All ships in ROS status and fully crewed.

Mississippi Voyager — Ken Speas, delegate. Had some issues with the food orders for a trip but looks like problem has been solved. Terry Igot, bosun.

Matthew Henning



Dispatcher's Report

Headquarters — April 2023

Deck	
Bosun	4
Carpenter	0
MM	11
AB	17
OS.....	4
Standby S.F.	4
Total Deck Jobs Shipped	40
Total Deck B, C & D Shipped.....	20
Engine/Steward	
QMED.....	0
Pumpman	0
Oiler.....	0
Wiper	0
Steward	0
Cook.....	0
Messman.....	0
Total E&S Jobs Shipped	0
Total E&S B, C, & D Shipped.....	0
Total Jobs Shipped-All Depts.....	40
Total B, C, & D Shipped-All Depts.	20
Total Registered "A"	17
Total Registered "B"	24
Total Registered "C"	9
Total Registered "D"	18



On the main deck of *President Cleveland*, SUP bosun Val Goncharov, getting the job done SUP-style.

SUP BRANCH REPORTS

HONOLULU

April 2023

SHIPPING: The following jobs were dispatched for the month: 1 Bosun Steady, 2 AB Day steady, 4 AB Watch steady, 1 AB Watch Relief, 1 AB Maintenance, 1 AB Maintenance Relief, 1 Ordinary. 1 USNS Bosun, 2 USNS AB, 1 USNS Ordinary, and 1 GVA. There were 13 Standbys Jobs dispatched for the month.

REGISTERED: 9 A-Cards, 17 B-Cards, 2 C-Cards, and 2 D-Cards.

SHIPS CHECKED: *USNS Charlton, USNS Watson, Herodote, Dakar, Kamokuiki, Manulani, Lurline, R.J. Pfeiffer, Kaimana Hila, Manoa, Maunalei, Maunawili, Manukai, Matsonia*, and the Paint & Rigging Gang (Overtime minimum issues are being looked into). Mahalo to the Delegates for doing a sometimes thankless job and doing it well.

Agents Report:

Honolulu's first five trainees are set for the Matson Sponsored LNG training. I would like to thank these members for not only committing to taking the class. But for also committing to a far off dispatch, with a timeframe that is still uncertain. There is still a lot of buzz about members wanting to take this initial training. I'm being told that should other unions in the Matson sponsored training vacate slots during this upcoming class, we may be able to get more members into it. Members are uneasy about limited spots available, and the uncertainty of classes here in the future. I'm told there will be more classes in the future, and that HQ is working to make this a part of the standard training curriculum for the Andrew Furuseth School of Seamanship.

I strongly recommend obtaining a secondary passport at this time. With ships either coming from or going into the China shipyards. Visa's will be required, and unfortunately, they are not as easy as to obtain as in the past. Let me know if you need help with this.

Along with the Hawaii Port Maritime Council, I traveled to Molokai to represent the SUP at the Maritime Career Exploration event sponsored by MariMed, Alu Like, and Maui Community College. For an island with a population of under 7500 people. We spoke to about 100 people about the importance of the maritime industry, and how to get what they need to make our industry a viable career option after High School. The SUP also took part in the "Labor of Love" School improvement and career exploration event sponsored by the Hawaii State AFL-CIO at Samford B. Dole Middle School. We teamed up with IATSE Local 665, and ILWU Local 142 members and their families to do a whole lot of painting. The building trade unions made major repairs and facility upgrades, and the Hawaii State AFL-CIO made an \$85,000.00 donation to this underserved campus. I would like to thank Brother Brandon Keopuhiwa and his family for coming out to volunteer their time and effort.

If you have six months or less before your document expires. It's time to start the renewal process.

**Fraternally Submitted,
Patrick Max Weisbarth**

WILMINGTON

April 2023

Shipping: Bosun, 2; AB/W, 5; AB/D, 7; OS/STOS, 2; GVA/GUDE, 0; Standby, 36. **Total Jobs Shipped: 52 Registrations:** A 19, B 28, C 4, D 7.

Ships Visited: Making regular visits as time permits me Also keeping in contact by phone and email.

Agents Report:

Shipping has been good in Wilmington, thanks to the membership for accepting jobs. There are more to come so come in and register. Second round of LNG training has completed All those who attended please come in or call so we can begin the process of getting it in your MMC as the Coast Guard is having delays. All information about the Coast Guard delays is

posted in the hall. Maritime day 22nd of May is almost here, come in to get info on attending there will be Speakers and the LAFD will put on a water show. The luncheon will be held at the double tree hotel in San Pedro, SUP has reserved a table. More information is available in the hall. Sign up on the waiting list in case any cancelations. Wilmington meetings are held every 3rd Monday of each month @ 1100 we need more members participating. Stay ahead of your expiring documentation. Expiration dates are on said documentation.

**Fraternally Submitted,
Leo Martinez**

SEATTLE

April 2023

Shipping: 1 Navy Boatswain (B); 1 Navy OS (D); 2 AB/W. Matson called for three Standby AB's (3A)

Registered: 4 A card for a total of 8; 10 B card for a total of 15 1 C card for a total of 1; 1 D card for a total of 7

Agents Report:

This month, Seattle saw some open board jobs come up, but we could not fill them because we had no members with Chinese visas. It may be wise when returning for vacation that members take advantage of their time off to apply for a Chinese visa to open more job opportunities that arise.

The struggle to fill *Watson* Class jobs

continues. Members, please keep up with your documents and ensure that your training is in order. Also, those who have been vaccinated for tuberculosis in their youth will likely test positive and should consider getting a Quantiferon Gold, or T-Spot test done prior to being dispatched to speed up the process and avoid a TNFFD. Both tests are considered valid by Anderson Kelly and vary in price and availability depending on the facility where it is performed. If you are qualified and enrolled for benefits the tests are also covered by our insurance at Kaiser Permanente.

**Fraternally, Brendan Bohannon
Seattle Branch Agent**

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

April 2023

Ships checked — April

I represented SUP at the monthly Alameda Labor Council delegate meeting this past month. With the Oakland A's now purchasing land in Las Vegas and publicly announcing they will move to Las Vegas; Port of Oakland looks like it will remain a port for Ships not ballparks and luxury condo's.

Matson DKI — Crew have all received their LNG endorsement from the Coast Guard, ship should be fully converted to LNG by end of Month and crew onboard. Peter Leo, bosun.

Matson Kamokuiki — Kenneth Carradine, delegate. Ship had an injury while in Diego Garcia that required member to depart the vessel. Ship had to sail short for

a week while Matson could secure a flight. Ernesto Lagramada, bosun.

APL Gulf Express — Fernando Rigonan, delegate. Ship is being replace by the **APL Eagle** in May. The crew will cross deck in Jebel Ali. Christian Demesa, delegate. There is a strong chance that the **Gulf Express** will remain an American Flag ship, non MSP, and run on the East Coast. See presidents report for details.

APL President Eisenhower — Scott Oliphant, delegate. Ship was delayed a week into Oakland because of engine repairs in San Pedro. Roger Tupas, bosun.

APL President Cleveland — Romelito Linatoc, delegate. Clarification on call outs and pyramiding. Val Goncharov, bosun.

continued on page 11

BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT

April 2023

Daniel K. Inouye — Shipyard work in China ongoing as vessel converts over to LNG. Company anticipates shipyard compilation sometime in the middle of May subject to change.

Manoa — Oak#62 Delegate Gerry Marshall. Sailed for Los Angeles with no issues. Caught wind that the schedule has changed and now headed on the CLX run. John Crockett as Bosun.

Lurline — Oak#62 Delegate Saher Ali — Sailed for Los Angeles with no issues, running steady on the Southern triangle. Matson has this vessel switching runs in June always subject to change. Noel Itsumaru as Bosun.

Matsonia — Jose Duran delegate. Sailed for Honolulu with no beefs, Matson schedule has us switching over to the CLX run. David Reinking as Bosun.

Kamokuiki — Kenneth Carradine, delegate. In Singapore Bosun (Erik Thunstrom) suffered an injury to his hand. Found unfit he was repatriated back to the States: last reported in good health and recovering Ernie Lagramada was dispatched as Bosun.

Mahi Mahi — Marc Dulay delegate. Sailed for Honolulu with no beefs, we just received an email that one of Matson feeder ships broke down and now we are being diverted to Busan, Korea. Schedule has us back on the west coast in the middle of May. Remoni Tufono, Bosun

Mokihana — Delegate Kim Dulay activated a month earlier than expected due to one of Matson's feeder ships breaking down. According to the company this break out will be for 14 days then the vessel will Lay-up. Plan is to reactivate again in June subject to change. Teofilo Rojas as Bosun

Manulani — Oakland#62 Delegate Joe Eckert in for a short stay this ship has been plagued with electrical issues. Store's crane failed limit switch and caused over shift to offshore and luckily came to a stop, hanging on by a nut and bolt. In another incident Gangway motor started moving on its own, quick thinking to shut down power saved a couple of sailors from meeting their maker. This was addressed in the safety meeting and expect our concerns to be addressed. Mark Littlejohn as Bosun.

RJ Pfeiffer — Delegate Jill Holleman. Matson continues NOT to call std — by's, knowing those of us on here arriving in port will be maxed out STCW hrs. This Budget B.S. is a safety issue. Dave Purganan as Bosun.

Matson RRF Fleet S.F.

Cape Horn — Pier#50 ROS status with (Gva)Taylor Weisbarth, (Gude) Tyrone Ridges and Dennis Sumague as Bosun.

Cape Hudson — In ROS in SF with (Gva) Geremia Dean (Gude) Steve Martin with Muthana Koraish as Bosun. Rumors have the Cape Hom activating sometime in June subject to change.

Patriot RRF fleet — Oakland outer harbor

Cape Orlando — ROS in Oakland with (Gva) Luis Abea, (Gude) Mousa Moqbel and Bosun Isagani Cruz .

Admiral Callaghan — Also in ROS (Gva), Mikko Rex Relojo (Gude) with Bosun Taqif Wasel.

APL Gulf Express — In Jebel Ali Fernando Rigonan, delegate the latest news cross decking over could be in the in Dubai Shipyard to APL Eagle. There's also talk of Singapore shipyard wherever they decide the gang will be up for the challenge planning a smooth transition to APL Eagle. There's nothing we can't handle getting the job done SUP Style Christian De'mesa Bosun.

Oakland #55 SSA Terminal.

President Truman — Janan Johair delegate working steady with Cosmo Bigno Bosun.

President Cleveland — Romelito Linatoc delegate working with Valeriy Goncharov, Bosun.

President Eisenhower — Scott Oliphant delegate delayed arrival due breakdown Rogers Tupas Bosun.

President Roosevelt — Checked all these ships with little or no beefs.

Pier#9 SFBP Big Mike Koller delegate — Running smooth with Leo Moore as Dock Bosun.

With the National Maritime center reporting delays in the MMC renewal process. Union Recommends you start the renewal process 9 months in advance. You know your business better than anyone don't get caught with expired documents. Ask your local agent he can assist you with checking your documents.

Visited the ship's, worked in the front office and helped dispatch.

Roy Tufono