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MARITIME TRADES DEPARTMENT, AFL-CIO ■ 2009 QUADRENNIAL CONVENTION
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America's Maritime Highway

Infrastructure problems within the United States are too numerous to list in a two-day convention. All of us either have been affected or heard stories about these problems ranging from water main breaks to highways crumbling.

Yes, transportation is in need of upgrading and modernization. The nation's highways and railways are stretched to capacity, especially along the coastlines. Marketers and sales people have to take into account traffic and rail backups when planning as-needed and on-time inventory.

Yet, one form of transportation has been underutilized stands ready to assist – coastwise shipping.

The MTD has been working with shipyard, shipping industry, transportation and government officials to find a way to ease the burden of the nation's highways and railroads while offering a viable alternative for transporting goods.

Through the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Maritime Administration, such a program is being presented to members of Congress as "America's Maritime Highway."

Already, the chairman of the influential House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN), said he wants "to embrace" the program. Speaking this summer to the Washington, DC, Propeller Club, the chairman added he is seeking a way for land-based haulers to work with maritime to ease transportation congestion and gridlock.

Recent economic studies have shown multiple benefits in implementing a maritime highway (or short sea shipping) initiative. Among them are improved U.S. productivity rates, reduced pollution levels and new job creation. The new ships needed for this effort would be built in U.S. yards. They would utilize U.S. citizen crews.

Implementing such a program would assist with port modernization which would improve rail and highway access to these facilities. It also would call for increased dredging to allow the ever-larger more efficient commercial vessels to sail safely into the nation's harbors.

As the MTD has noted throughout the campaign for America's Maritime Highway, any program must include:

- Policies that preserve and promote a viable U.S. shipbuilding industry;

- Reorientation of U.S. policy that waterborne transportation is more efficient, cost effective and environmentally friendly than most other transportation modes;
- Realizing \$1 billion invested in ocean transportation creates 40,000 jobs;
- Development of a new training model to meet the needs of the new short sea shipping industry;
- Developing a vibrant public/private sector partnership to create a new generation of U.S.-crewed coastwise vessels; and
- Development and adoption of policies to ensure that port facilities have better access to highways and rails.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils continue to do everything possible to work with members of Congress, the administration and other transportation modes to implement America's Maritime Highway as a means to create new jobs, ease gridlock and reduce pollution while increasing the nation's productivity.

Brother John Sweeney

Next week, the labor movement faces a bittersweet moment as our longtime leader and friend, John Sweeney, steps down from his post as president of the AFL-CIO.

We in the MTD would never begrudge John his well-earned retirement. Naturally, we wish him good health and much happiness. But, it goes without saying that we will be sorry to see him go.

John Sweeney has served four terms as president of our federation. He first was elected president in 1995 and was re-elected by acclamation in 1997, 2001 and 2005.

Throughout all of those years, without exception, John has been a true friend to the MTD and our affiliates. He has approached his job with such complete, round-the-clock dedication that it's sometimes hard to believe there aren't two or three clones of him. John has gone wherever his affiliates need him from coast to coast, no matter if it is in a meeting room or on a picket line, at a local union hall or in the halls of Congress. He always puts union members and their families first.

John began his journey with the labor movement as a research assistant in the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union. In 1961, he became a representative with Local 32B of the Service Employees International Union. He rose through the ranks to become president of the SEIU by 1980. Under his leadership, the union grew from 625,000 members to 1.1 million.

Biographical information alone, however, cannot do justice to explaining what John means to organized labor. He oversaw the federation during very challenging times, but he never blinked. John's calm exterior perhaps belies a remarkable tenacity rarely seen in this era. He combines old-school labor doggedness with modern wherewithal and diplomacy as needed.

However, no salute to John is complete without recognizing the lady who has been at his side throughout all of these battles, his lovely wife Maureen.

John's commitment to and belief in organizing is one particular example we would do well to follow. It was part of his original platform in 1995 and it remains a top priority today, as evidenced by the federation's strong push for the Employee Free Choice Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils salute and thank John Sweeney for his many years of service to all working people as well as his effective and dedicated leadership as president of the AFL-CIO. We wish him nothing but calms seas and the wind to his back in retirement. We will always consider him a true friend.

Cargo Preference

A bedrock of the U.S.-flag maritime industry is the nation's series of cargo preference laws.

These laws have played a vital role ensuring that America has a strong domestic shipbuilding base and merchant marine. Cargo preference laws help create good-paying jobs for American workers, provide tax revenues at the local, state and federal levels, and make sure America's merchant marine is ready and available when needed for strategic sealift and other defense interests.

There are three main components to the nation's cargo preference laws:

- The Cargo Preference Act of 1904 requires all cargo procured or owned by the U.S. military be carried exclusively aboard U.S.-flag vessels;
- Public Resolution 17, enacted in 1934, states that all cargo generated by the Export-Import Bank be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels; and
- The Cargo Preference Act of 1954 mandates that a percentage of certain kinds of government-generated cargo be carried aboard U.S.-flag commercial vessels at fair and reasonable rates.

The 1954 act is the one better known to most people for its "Food for Peace" section. This is the measure that covers humanitarian aid to people needing help around the world. In fact, the *Maersk Alabama* and the *Liberty Sun* were carrying cargo preference-generated humanitarian aid to Africa when pirates attempted to hijack those vessels earlier this year.

Under the Food for Peace provision (Title II of the 1954 act) more than 100 million tons of food aid have benefited billions of poor and hungry people around the world. Title I of the law has generated more than \$30 billion in sales of agricultural commodities to developing nations.

Despite the success of its efforts, the Food for Peace program faces continual attack. Some members of Congress have tried to divert monies from the purchase of commodities grown in the United States and give those funds directly to nations in need to buy their own goods. The MTD, its maritime unions and the maritime industry – as well as U.S. farmers – have fought back against these proposals because they would take jobs away from Americans both in the maritime and the agricultural sectors. The transfer of cash also has raised alarms for the possibility of corruption and theft.

In fact, the importance of the cargo preference programs was underscored last year by President Obama in a letter to the presidents of the maritime unions:

"A strong U.S.-flag commercial fleet needs our nation's cargo preference laws. Whether it is carrying needed goods to those overseas in distress or moving

government-generated cargo, American mariners aboard American ships make sure the job is done. People around the world look to the U.S. flag as a symbol of hope and determination. Ships flying Old Glory with American crews are important icons of our resolve.”

The MTD couldn't have said it better ourselves.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils do everything within their power to make sure America's cargo preference laws remain strong, vibrant and important to the country's well-being, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils work with government and elected officials to underscore the economic and national security needs for the cargo preference laws.

Contract with AT&T

*(submitted by the Communications Workers of America
and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers)*

Since April, tens of thousands of our union sisters and brothers in the CWA and the IBEW have been working without a contract at AT&T.

We have seen the television ads that AT&T has been running lately announcing investments in new vehicles and updated equipment in order to meet the challenges of the 21st century. New toys are wonderful. Everyone likes having something new.

And, AT&T has been able to make these investments because of the record profits it has been posting.

But one thing is missing from this mix: people!

No company survives without having the trained and skilled men and women behind the scenes making sure all the new (and old) toys work.

The connection between AT&T and its unions goes back many decades. While there have been some bumps in the road, the unions through their members helped to make AT&T the world leader that it is today.

Yet, it seems AT&T is forgetting its history.

Some of the most contentious issues at the bargaining table involve deleting or reducing benefits to the very union retirees who built AT&T. The company also is seeking givebacks from the unions on health care, vacation and retirement benefits for its present workers.

CWA and IBEW members at the table and on the job understand their unions are made up of all components: taking care of those who fought before, helping those who are with the company now and looking out for those who will be signing on in the future.

That is why CWA and IBEW members continue to stay on the job while their negotiators fight for a fair contract that benefits the members as well as the company.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils stand with the more than 100,000 union members fighting for a new contract with AT&T; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils are ready to assist in whatever way possible at the local, regional and national level to support CWA and IBEW members obtain a fair and just contract.

Dredging

(submitted by the International Union of Operating Engineers)

When the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee stated recently that funds need to be appropriated for dredging America's navigable waterways, then someone other than the MTD and its affiliates realizes it must be a priority.

Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN) told the Washington (D.C.) Propeller Club in June that he is concerned the nation's ports and harbors are not ready to handle the larger ships being used to transport the world's cargo. Experts have forecast that international trade will double between 2000 and 2020. Yet, the 18-term congressman is warning that America is not ready.

Oberstar declared he would work to obtain money for dredging all of the nation's waterways, from deep-sea ports to river channels.

The MTD salutes the concern of Chairman Oberstar. For years, the Department and its affiliates have been calling attention to the need to keep America's waterways clear and available for commercial transportation.

During this year's winter meeting, the MTD Executive Board approved a statement that reported a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' study that analyzed 59 of the busiest commercial shipping channels within the country and discovered half of them were available at their proper depth or width for less than one-third of the year.

On the Great Lakes, harbor dredging remains a major need. Vessels cannot be fully loaded with coal, ore, salt and other goods because the harbors and channels have been filling with sediment and other materials preventing efficient operations.

Operators along the major navigable rivers like the Mississippi, Ohio and Missouri are having problems because those channels have not been cleared.

The MTD and its affiliates have been warning of these problems for years, calling upon the federal government and Congress at both of our conventions this century for help.

Yet, as all this has been taking place, the money collected by the Harbor Maintenance Tax has not been used to alleviate the problems within the ports. Since 2003, the U.S. has appropriated fewer dollars on dredging projects than the annual amounts collected by the Harbor Maintenance Tax. The tax fund actually had a \$4.7 billion surplus as of Fiscal Year 2007 – money that could be used to dredge ports.

America's maritime industry generates millions of jobs around the country. In this time of economic distress, our elected officials should be working on ways to keep people working while finding new opportunities for those seeking jobs. Maintaining the nation's ports, harbors and waterways would stimulate job growth and activities through maritime transportation.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils continue the fight to gain more funding for the important need of dredging the nation's harbors, ports and waterways through the support of legislation to ensure that all monies collected through the Harbor Maintenance Tax are used for the intended purpose of dredging, and through other means, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils do whatever is possible to assist Chairman Oberstar in educating the members of Congress on the stimulative value of these vital projects.

Health Care for All

In 1946 when the Maritime Trades Department was chartered by the AFL, Harry Truman was into his second year as president of the United States.

Truman was at the helm when World War II ended and the troops came home to resume their normal lives. Truman recalled the era before the war when the Great Depression ravaged the country. During that time, health care was only available to the wealthy. A severe illness could financially devastate a family.

When Social Security legislation was proposed, health care for all Americans was included. However, groups such as the American Medical Association lobbied hard in Congress and health care was removed from the measure. Through the Roosevelt administration's New Deal programs designed to get people back to work, many young men employed in some of the projects were getting health care for the first time. Still others received their first experiences with health care when they joined the military.

Now, these members of the "Greatest Generation" were returning – and in some cases, facing the same challenges and concerns as when they left to serve their country.

Truman called for a national health care policy. However, the country wasn't in the mood as it was trying to return to peace.

Taking up the cause was the union movement. Workers gave up pay raises and other benefits in contract negotiations in order to have health coverage for themselves and their families. Unions set the standard that others wanted to meet. Non-union companies had to provide health care plans for their workers in order to keep them.

The fight on Capitol Hill for health care for all didn't die. In 1965, Congress passed and President Lyndon Johnson signed – with President Truman as a witness – the Medicare bill. This legislation provided universal health care coverage for all Americans over the age of 65. It was the first step toward Truman's dream of coverage for all. And despite claims from medical groups and insurance companies, the sky didn't fall when Medicare was implemented.

Studies have shown the value of Medicare. Prior to its passage, many senior citizens lived in poverty with failing health. After Medicare became the law of the land, most of those over the age of 65 have been able to enjoy fulfilling lives since how they would acquire health care has been handled by the government. Today's seniors are viewed as vibrant, active parts of the community whereas prior to Medicare many were basically wards of their families.

But the fight for health care for all didn't end there. It continued as unions and health care activists pushed elected officials about the need for covering those who were unable to afford coverage. This culminated in 1993 when President Bill Clinton created a task force to study how to implement a national health care program. Clinton even outlined his ideas at the 1993 AFL-CIO Convention in San Francisco. However, the administration didn't prepare the American people for the backlash from the medical and insurance communities. The proposal failed to get out of Congress.

Before and since that effort, health care prices started to skyrocket. Insurance costs struggled to keep up. Union members who had health care coverage were asked to give some of it up or pay higher costs. Those without coverage – rather than fight to gain it for themselves – openly chastised those with health care asking what made them so special. The argument that union workers had given up other things to have health care did not matter as the mentality of the day stated “If I don't have it, you shouldn't.”

Meanwhile, the number of Americans without any type of health care continued to grow. Low-wage companies, who took advantage of local tax breaks to open shops and stores in the communities, failed to provide health care coverage, counting on public health agencies to pick up the cost. This created another burden on taxpayers as well as those with insurance as they had to subsidize the costs for those without.

As the economy began to falter last year, more and more workers lost their jobs, adding to the rolls of those without any type of health care. Today, nearly 50 million people – many of them children – have no type of coverage.

Health care for all was a major issue in last year's presidential campaign. Upon taking office in January, President Barack Obama made passage of health care legislation a priority for this year.

As we meet, Congress is debating several different proposals in order to craft a single piece of legislation to cover the uninsured while making sure those with coverage remain satisfied. The old saying that there are two things the general public should never see – sausage being made and legislation being crafted – remains true. We have witnessed a summer of screaming, shouting and pushing by normally sane Americans at congressional town hall meetings because they either don't understand what is happening in Washington or they have been manipulated by those who don't want the change needed by so many.

But more than 70 years since Roosevelt sought health care as part of the New Deal, more than 60 years since Truman envisioned the need for health care for all as troops came home from war, more than 40 years since Johnson signed Medicare and nearly 20 years since Clinton formed a task force to study such a program, the

Obama administration has the country closer to real health care for all than ever before. We cannot let this opportunity be wasted.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils renew our efforts to secure health care for all Americans, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils work with their members of Congress to create a system in which employers would either offer coverage or pay into a fund to finance coverage for uninsured workers while making sure that taxation of those with benefits is not included.

In Memoriam

As we in the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO plot a course for the future, it is important to remember those Motivated, Trained and Dedicated members who have helped make the Department what is today. Any success that we in the North American maritime industry and labor movement have had in enhancing the rights and job security of workers is due to the contributions of those who came before us.

Over the past four years, we have lost many good friends and co-workers. Among those whom we mourn are:

John Barry. Former president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and MTD board member.

George Becker. Former president of the United Steel Workers of America.

Martin Byrne. Former Executive Assistant to the President of the International Association of Iron Workers.

Angus “Red” Campbell. Former Vice President of the Seafarers International Union and official with the Puerto Rico Port Maritime Council.

Sam Church. Former President of the United Mine Workers of America.

Richard Cordtz. Former President of the Service Employees International Union and MTD board member.

Charles Crangle. Former Legislative Director for the American Maritime Officers.

Richard Davis. Former Vice President of United Steel Workers of America and MTD board member.

Evy Dubrow. Former Legislative Director for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and labor activist.

John Fay. Former Executive Vice President of Seafarers International Union and MTD board member.

Rex Hardesty. Former labor activist, union communicator and member of the Office and Professional Employees International Union.

James Hatfield. Former President of the Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers International Union and MTD board member.

Steve Judd. Former President of the Port Maritime Council of Greater New Orleans and Vicinity.

Ed Kelly. Former Vice President for the American Maritime Officers.

Dominic Martell. Former President of the Operative Plasterers' and Cement Masons' International Association of the United States and Canada and MTD board member.

James Norton. Former President of the Graphic Communications International Union and MTD board member.

Leon Shapiro. Former Secretary-Treasurer of the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association.

Tal Simpkins. Former official with the National Maritime Union.

Jacob West. Former President of the International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers and MTD board member.

Maritime Labor Convention

In this day and age in which businesses are consolidating around the world, one global effort is underway to bring together the various rules of the seas to the benefit of mariners, shipowners and governments alike.

The Consolidated Maritime Labor Convention (MLC), adopted by the International Labor Organization in 2006, seeks to combine into one document the minimum standards required to provide the satisfactory conditions of employment for the world's seafarers.

More than 50 different international standards come together into one single document, which has been dubbed by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) as a "bill of rights for seafarers."

Provisions within the MLC include:

- An employment agreement guaranteeing decent shipboard working and living conditions that would be signed by both the mariner and the shipowner (or its representative);
- Monthly pay in full and in accordance with the employment agreement and any applicable collective agreement;
- A 14-hour work limit within any 24-hour period, and 72-hour limit within any seven-day period;
- Shipowner must pay to repatriate mariner in case of illness, injury, shipwreck, insolvency, or ship sale;
- Specific requirements for living accommodations and recreational facilities aboard vessel;
- Access to prompt medical care when on board or in port; and
- Measures for effective enforcement and compliance include a certification system for labor standards.

Those involved in crafting the convention believe it is a winning proposal for all because it lays out a comprehensive set of basic maritime labor principles and rights for the mariners, including the right to make complaints both aboard ship and in port.

For the seafarer, the MLC provides clear identification of just who the shipowner with overall responsibility is.

The MLC offers shipowners a more level playing field to insure fair competition while marginalizing substandard operations and allows the shipowner the ability to crew a better-protected and more efficient workforce. The MLC contains minimum standards that are well within current industry practices and should be easily met by most owners.

The MLC simplifies reporting obligations for national governments into one convention rather than many. It provides wider enforcement powers on all ships and protects against unfair competition from substandard ships through its “no more favorable treatment” provision for ships of non-ratifying countries.

But, the one thing blocking all this from being implemented is the lack of ratification by the nations of the world – including the United States and Canada. U.S.-flag and Canadian-flag vessels already meet the obligations within the convention, yet many of the ships sailing into U.S. and Canadian ports do not.

The ITF, with the assistance of many MTD affiliates, has been fighting for decades against these substandard ships and for the mariners aboard them through its flag-of-convenience campaign. Many of these flag-of-convenience vessels operate through a deceptive patchwork of paper trails in which mariners barely subsist at sea and unfortunately receive less pay – when it is provided – than promised when they signed on.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO joins with its allies in the ITF to call upon the major maritime powers of the world – including the United States and Canada – in ratifying the Maritime Labor Convention.

Maritime Security Program

In the aftermath of the first Persian Gulf War, military planners, shipping officials and maritime labor realized the United States was woefully lacking in modern merchant vessels capable of transporting large amounts of weapons and other materiel to troops staged in combat zones around the world.

The fleet called upon to sail in 1990 and 1991 included some ships from World War II that had been in lay up for years. Retirees came back to serve their country, which turned out to be a good thing as parts for the older ships weren't available and had to be made by those who still had the knowledge to do so. Additionally, the military was depending on vessels owned by American companies, but flagged in a different nation with foreign nationals as the crew. In several well-documented cases, the foreign crews balked at moving military cargo into the Kuwaiti war zone forcing the companies to bring in American crews to finish the job.

Working together, the military planners, shipping officials and maritime labor devised a program that would allow the Department of Defense to secure militarily useful commercial vessels along with their infrastructure support system in times of conflict or national emergency in exchange for an annual stipend.

The program was introduced to the Congress in 1992 by President George H.W. Bush's administration. It had strong bipartisan support and finally emerged as law in 1996 with President Bill Clinton's signature.

The Maritime Security Program (MSP) covered 47 U.S.-flag vessels over a 10-year period. It proved its worth in the early years of this decade with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq with the then head of the U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), General John W. Handy, declaring before Congress: "The MSP is a vital element of our military's strategic sealift and global response capability."

Rather than wait for MSP to expire, the military, shipping officials and maritime labor pushed Congress to renew and expand the program. By the end of 2003, President George W. Bush signed the renewed MSP calling for the inclusion of up to 60 vessels.

Its continued importance was underscored just last year at the MTD Executive Board meeting when Vice Admiral Ann Rondeau, then serving as deputy commander of USTRANSCOM, said, "When so many countries, even traditional allies, are hostile to our strategic goals, it is imperative that this nation possess the ability to project its military capability abroad. America simply cannot rely on others to perform this vitally important task."

Additionally, to show the continued support for MSP, then candidate Barack Obama pledged: "To make sure our armed forces have the equipment and ammunition they

need at the time the materiel are required, my administration will solidly support the continuation of the Maritime Security Program. The MSP has proved itself since being enacted in 1996, making sure our troops deployed overseas have no worries about when their supplies will be delivered.”

With all this support – from four administrations and Congress to the military – the MSP still faces one obstacle: It must be funded annually. Even though there have been some concerns, the program has received full funding. But there is always the threat.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils thank the White House, Congress and military for their strong support through the years for the highly successful Maritime Security Program, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils salute the effective job performed by U.S. mariners and the U.S.-flag ship operators who have ensured the program’s success, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils continue their efforts to ensure full funding for the program.

Offshore Renewable Energy

The Obama Administration and Congress have made investments in renewable energy a high priority, providing billions of dollars in federal funding to stimulate investments and create green jobs. These investments in renewable energy are needed to move the country towards a more sustainable environment and to make our nation more energy independent.

One sector of renewable energy represents a growth area — offshore renewable energy. Offshore renewable energy potential in wind, wave, and tidal energy nearly equals the current U.S. electrical capacity, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Substantial job growth is expected in the construction and servicing of offshore facilities. As the Senate Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee has noted, “the prospect for renewable energy development on the [Outer Continental Shelf] continues to show promise as a means of meeting our nation’s energy demand ... It is imperative that the benefits granted to the maritime industry by Congress are recognized and enforced with respect to any maritime transportation to and from the United States to such installations.”

Many of these offshore renewable projects are sited within America’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). It is essential that the jobs created by these projects are filled by Americans. For example, the cabotage laws, which are supported by President Obama, require the movement of waterborne cargo between U.S. points by vessels that are American-crewed, American-built and American-owned. These laws are critical to U.S. economic, national, and homeland security. The Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act extends the coastwise laws to points or places on the Outer Continental Shelf of the United States. That law was amended by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to enhance offshore renewable development. Presidential Proclamation 5030 was issued “to facilitate the wise development and use of the oceans” and extended sovereign rights of the United States to its EEZ for economic exploration and benefit, including the production of energy from the water, currents, and winds.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils reaffirm our strong belief that Congress must ensure that the development and operation of offshore renewable energy facilities will benefit American workers and American companies constructing and servicing such facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils do everything within their power to ensure that the cabotage and other federal laws are applied to the development of offshore renewable energy in all respects.

Pass the Employee Free Choice Act

Working people have borne the brunt of economic downturns witnessed at both ends of this decade.

At the same time, union membership has decreased. Study after study has reported that decreasing union membership equates to decreased opportunities for income growth, health care benefits and retirement benefits for all working people.

Yet, polling has shown a majority of workers nationally would join a union if they had the opportunity.

Since the 1935 passage of the National Labor Relations Act which opened the door for workers to organize, all other major pieces of labor legislation have restricted such efforts by working people to improve their lives. In fact, the balance of power is so tilted to the employer side that they are able to stall and delay to prevent the will of the workers without fear of legal action or retribution. To add insult to injury, the Chamber of Commerce is concerned that 15 percent of all organizing efforts actually do result in a collective bargaining agreement.

Working families have been fighting for passage of the Employee Free Choice Act since it was introduced in Congress in 2004.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils worked hard last year to elect pro-worker members of Congress as well as President Obama and Vice President Biden with the hope of gaining legislation that would help all working families.

As we meet, passage of the Employee Free Choice Act is pending action by the Senate;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils redouble their efforts in contacting members of the United States Senate to emphasize the need for approving the Employee Free Choice Act which would benefit the lives of all working people.

Piracy

The problems with piracy have been well documented for centuries. In fact, the maritime affiliates of the MTD have had to deal with this since the Department's founding more than 60 years ago.

But, the world's media earlier this year became alarmed that pirates not only still exist in the 21st century, but that they also attempted to capture the U.S.-flagged, U.S.-crewed *Maersk Alabama* as the ship sailed off the coast of Somalia on April 8.

Fortunately, as we know, the well-trained union crewmembers from the MM&P, MEBA and SIU aboard the *Maersk Alabama* worked together to prevent a hijacking of their ship. All the crewmembers credited the training they had received from their unions as well as constant drills aboard ship for foiling the pirates' scheme.

As has been documented, Captain Richard Phillips, in order to save his crew and ship, risked his life by becoming a hostage to the four Somali pirates who boarded his vessel. The U.S. government and the U.S. Navy took immediate action that eventually led to the rescue of Captain Phillips, whose life was in danger from his weapon-wielding captors.

Days later, another U.S.-flag ship, the *Liberty Sun*, was fired upon while sailing in the same region. Once again, well-trained U.S.-citizen union crews thwarted that attempt and all hands emerged safe.

Those of us in the maritime industry wish these were the only cases, but we know better.

Everyday, around the globe, pirates and other seaborne opportunists are attacking vessels of all types in hopes of monetary or political gain. Yet, as the Apostleship of the Sea has noted, many nations have turned their backs on ships flying their flags by saying merchant vessels should consider carrying arms. In fact, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) stated that the focus of many nations on the problem is to deter pirates from boarding thus protecting the vessels rather than protecting the mariners.

"Flag states have the ultimate responsibility for their ships," added the ITF. "When the pirates attacked a U.S.-crewed, U.S.-flag vessel, they received a rapid and effective response from the flag state."

The ITF, which consists of more than 600 transportation unions (including several MTD affiliates) from around the world, remains very concerned for all mariners, especially those aboard flag-of-convenience vessels which operate outside any supervision from their countries.

The human cost is most important, but it is worth noting that ocean commerce is the lifeblood of international trade, with 80 percent of all goods carried at sea. Further, both the *Maersk Alabama* and *Liberty Sun* were carrying U.S. aid cargo to assist impoverished nations in eastern Africa.

Following investigations by the International Maritime Organization, the United Nations passed a series of resolutions last year calling on the world's navies to work together to protect merchant vessels in the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Gulf of Oman. At the same time, the United States was designated to head a multi-national task force of military ships to protect commercial interests while attacking and/or capturing pirates.

Basically, piracy has been a version of terrorism implemented against vessels of all types – from large commercial ships to small private sailing crafts – and their crews for centuries. It is not the just the subject of ghost stories and movies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils support the call of our union brothers and sisters and throughout the world that all mariners, no matter from which country they sail, must be able to ply their trade safely and without fear; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MTD salutes the courage and bravery exhibited by the unarmed union crews of the *Maersk Alabama* and the *Liberty Sun* for keeping control of their vessels while under armed attack on the high seas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MTD salutes President Barack Obama, the U.S. government, the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Navy for their decisive actions in saving the life of Captain Richard Phillips of the *Maersk Alabama*.

Remembering September 11th

The MTD's 2009 convention is taking place on the anniversary of one of the most tragic days in American history—September 11th. Eight years ago on this very day, 19 terrorists launched the most deadly attack on American soil since Pearl Harbor, killing thousands of people in Lower Manhattan, at the Pentagon and in a small field outside the city where we're meeting today, Pittsburgh.

In words, thoughts and deeds, members of the MTD and its affiliated unions paid tribute to the victims of that horrible day, as well as to the heroism and sacrifice of the millions of Americans who answered the call of duty. As noted in the MTD resolution adopted shortly after the tragedy occurred, "No one has not been affected in some way by the tragedies in New York City, northern Virginia or western Pennsylvania.

"The brothers and sisters within organized labor are no different. We lost families, members, co-workers and friends. We could not believe what we had witnessed or had heard.

"But some very brave union members didn't have time to think about that. They had to save the lives of people trapped in the damaged World Trade Center's Twin Towers. Firefighters, police officers and emergency medical personnel rushed to the scene after the aircrafts struck those buildings. They raced in as others dashed out. We will never know how many people they saved before those structures collapsed on them.

"Mariners on tugs and ferries carried scared onlookers to safety on the shores opposite Manhattan. They also transported the injured to ambulances waiting dockside. When the towers came down, union construction workers didn't ask what they should do. They immediately hustled to the scene to aid in the rescue. Some came with trucks, others with equipment, still others only with a hard hat and union card. Nobody had to tell them what to do..."

In the hours, days and weeks following the attack, union members donated blood, time and money in an effort to help those who had been affected. Organized labor responded as one.

Over the past eight years, maritime workers and trade union activists have been working to make America safer. Whether it's the civilian merchant mariners who carry cargo to the Persian Gulf, or the longshore workers who load the cargo, or domestic shipyard workers who build the vessels that go to crisis areas, or trade unionists from every sector who have served in the military, the industry and the movement have served as important components of a larger and unified strategy to ensure that what happened on 9/11 never happens again.

Let us not forget that the first to give their lives on that day were union flight attendants. But let us also not forget those still suffering today – the first responders and construction workers who raced to save others. Many of them are fighting illnesses associated with their efforts after the dastardly attacks. They are in our thoughts and prayers as much as the brave passengers who declared “Let’s Roll!” over these Pennsylvania skies, taking their lives to spare countless others.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that eight years to the date after the tragedy of September 11, the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils honor of the memories of those who lost their lives that day as well as the courage and professionalism of those who responded and those who have spent the ensuing time dedicated to ensuring that such an event never takes place ever again, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD joins with the AFL-CIO to continue the fight for proper care for those who have been felled by illness for their efforts in the cleanup afterwards.

Retirement Security

For generations of Americans, Social Security, defined-benefit pensions and personal savings were the nest egg for their golden years.

Millions of Americans worked throughout their adult life for the same company with the understanding that their efforts would be rewarded when retirement came about. Yet, during the last 20 years, more and more companies started shifting workers' retirement benefits from defined-benefit plans to defined-contribution plans, also known as 401(k)s.

These defined-contribution plans were sold as the way of the future because the individual would be in charge of his or her investments. But, some unscrupulous companies offered 401(k)s that solely invested in their own firms, only to go bust and lose the hard-earned savings of these unsuspecting workers.

The U.S. Department of Labor now reports that only 20 percent of those working in the private sector are covered by defined-benefit programs, and that number is decreasing.

We most recently have witnessed an ugly national campaign calling on our Brothers and Sisters in the United Auto Workers to give up hard-fought pension (and other) benefits in order to keep their companies competitive with lower-paying, benefit-denying foreign-based firms.

To complicate matters, those who were counting on their 401(k)s to provide adequate retirement coverage saw their savings decrease at a tremendous rate because of the economic and stock market downturn that resulted from high-risk speculation by financial institutions worldwide.

Yet, despite being the most successful U.S. government social program in the nation's history, Social Security remains under attack by those who would like to privatize the system and allow the same Wall Street manipulators who bungled the economy to handle this portion of Americans' retirement.

The Social Security Administration has reported that nearly two out of every three retirees depend on Social Security for half of their retirement income. That same report noted one of every five seniors count on Social Security as their only source of income.

Through all of this and more, the MTD has fought alongside the AFL-CIO to protect Social Security while standing up for the retirement concerns of all working Americans;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils continue with the rest of organized labor its traditional fight of standing up for and improving the retirement security of our members and all working people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils make sure that Social Security continues to be solvent and available to serve the needs of present and future retirees, the disabled and families when the bread earner dies.

Seafarers' Identity Document

The International Labor Organization (ILO) adopted the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (No. 185) as a result of a proposal first made by the United States at the International Maritime Organization (IMO). It is a well-constructed balance between the new security imperatives and the needs of the maritime industry, especially the mariners who serve aboard ships engaged in international voyages.

ILO 185 uses cost effective technology, including two fingerprints of the bearer encoded in a two-dimensional barcode, a computer strip and a digital photograph. The issuing country is required to have a focal point for the verification of the authenticity of a seafarers' identity document and verification that the person is who he or she says through the national database.

The national document issuance processes follow strict requirements established by the Convention and require an independent audit every five years.

ILO 185 provides that seafarers shall not be required to hold a visa for the purpose of shore leave. It also provides that any member state which is not in a position to fully implement this requirement shall ensure that its laws and regulations or practices provide arrangements that are substantially equivalent.

To date, ILO 185 has been ratified by 14 countries, but many maritime nations, including the United States and Canada, have yet to do so. A reason delaying widespread ratification is that many member states are concerned that the seafarers' identity document would not be accepted in the major ports and therefore are reluctant to make the necessary financial investments.

Mariners carry many other documents, including a passport, medical certification and certificates of competency, with U.S. seafarers also being required to have a Transportation Worker Identification Credential.

The MTD and others in the labor and international maritime community believe having a technologically advanced seafarers' identity document, which also is carried by foreign mariners, would provide greater security for ports while allowing the mariners the ability to temporarily disembark ships when tied up in harbors. Additionally, the MTD, along with its maritime affiliates, believes that ILO 185 meets the requirements for an international seafarer identification as set out in Section 103 of the United States Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002.

On top of all this, the shipping industry is having difficulty in recruiting and retaining suitably qualified mariners.

In this age of terrorism as well as the heightened awareness of piracy, the need for a universally recognized seafarers' identity document is critical. The technology is available to make it work, but some governments around the world lack the will to implement the document.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO joins with its affiliates, its Port Maritime Councils and the International Transport Workers' Federation in urging the United States, Canada and other maritime countries to ratify ILO 185; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the MTD believes that it is important that the United States and Canada show international leadership by ratifying and implementing ILO 185 as it would encourage other countries to do likewise.

Support Cabotage Laws

The first Congress of the United States realized the importance of cabotage by enacting such legislation as one of its original acts. Over the years, Congress and the White House have worked together to strengthen the nation's cabotage laws.

The nation's prime maritime cabotage law – the Jones Act – ensures that well-trained American citizen mariners working aboard U.S.-built, U.S.-flag vessels are prepared in the event they are called to serve their country.

U.S. military leaders recognize the value of the Jones Act as an important asset when their plans call for troop and equipment movement around the world. Also, members of Congress – no matter the chamber and no matter the party – continue to understand the need for the nation's cabotage laws.

During his campaign, President Obama stated, "America needs a strong and vibrant U.S.-Flag Merchant Marine. That is why you and your members can continue to count on me to support the Jones Act."

Additionally, America's cabotage laws cover other forms of transportation, including air, rail and highways. All forms of cabotage laws continually face attack from foreign interests and governments despite the fact that many of those nations have similar laws on their books while decrying America's so-called "protectionism."

America's cabotage laws provide hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs, especially important in this time of economic uncertainty. The cargo carried aboard Jones Act-fleet vessels, tugs and barges generate billions upon billions of dollars to the American economy annually.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils reaffirm our strong belief in the value of the nation's cabotage laws; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils do everything within their power to promote these laws and to educate legislators and the public on the importance cabotage has on the nation's economy and security.

Support The Troops

As we meet, American forces are positioned around the world, including Afghanistan, Iraq and the Indian Ocean off the coast of Somalia.

These brave and dedicated men and women include fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, aunts and uncles. They also include some of our Union Brothers and Sisters, who have turned in the tools of their trades for the uniform of their country.

These soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines represent the United States in peace and in conflict. They do whatever is necessary to protect freedom and fight tyranny. They offer comfort and aid to those who are hungry, in want or afflicted by natural or man-made disasters. They are served by many of our proud members who make the goods, load the ships and sail them so they are constantly and properly supplied.

These troops are the very fabric of the country they represent. They don't forget what it is like to be home. We must not forget them when they are in faraway places serving their country.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils salute and thank the members of the United States Armed Forces for their dedication to country and devotion to duty. May they perform their jobs well and return home safely to those who love and miss them.

Title XI Shipbuilding Loan Guarantee

With each new administration in Washington comes a new set of initiatives. Some are cycled along political lines. Some are determined by the immediate needs of the people.

But, as we have seen over the years, there is one issue that crosses party lines and remains relevant to America's economic and national security: domestic shipbuilding.

Bordered on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, the south by the Gulf of Mexico, the west by the Pacific Ocean, and the north by the Great Lakes, the United States always has been a maritime nation. That is no different today than it was when the fledgling country depended on seaborne commerce for its initial international trade.

While America counts on its ports, harbors and waterways to move all kinds of goods, there are some who seem to forget it takes American workers building American vessels to keep this commerce flowing smoothly.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, domestic commercial shipbuilding nearly fell dormant. As ships reached their attrition dates, new vessels were not being built to meet the demand. America was at risk of losing not only the ability to move goods, but also the highly skilled men and women who built and sailed the vessels.

The Defense Reconversion Act of 1993 changed all this by reviving the Title XI Shipbuilding Loan Guarantee Program. This measure made low-cost capital available to those who would build new bottoms in U.S. shipyards. During this building emphasis, new tugs, tankers, containerships, barges and more emerged from U.S. yards – helping local economies with good-paying jobs while providing tax revenues to the community.

In fact, studies during that period revealed every dollar invested in the Title XI program generated \$20 worth of economic activity. The program was a winner.

Yet, through this decade, the program has been rolled back to almost nothing – just covering the basic administrative costs. At the same time, maritime unions and the shipping industry have been working with the Maritime Administration to create "America's Maritime Highway" (see separate resolution). This would supplement land-based transport of cargo by easing congestion on the rails and highways. It also would reduce pollution, improve productivity and create badly needed middle-class jobs.

In order for this to work, America needs a strong domestic shipbuilding industry. Restoring funds to the Title XI Shipbuilding Loan Guarantee Program is a proven, readily available method of getting the new ships that will be needed, creating new

jobs within the shipyards as well as aboard the vessels, and stimulating the economy.

As noted earlier, Title XI has strong bipartisan support. Earlier this year, nearly 60 senators and representatives from both parties signed a letter renewing their support for domestic shipbuilding: "Expanding American shipbuilding has the dual benefit of strengthening a critical branch of our national defense while bolstering our strained economy. At a time when American manufacturing jobs are moving overseas, we have an opportunity to create highly skilled jobs for the American manufacturing workforce here at home."

Adding emphasis to the need for Title XI, the president of the NASSCO shipyard in San Diego, Fred Harris, told the MTD Executive Board earlier this year that "the condition of the U.S. maritime industry is important to everyone."

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils work with the members of Congress and the Obama administration to educate them on the importance and need for a strong domestic shipbuilding capability, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils continue the fight for funding for the Title XI Shipbuilding Loan Guarantee Program.

A United Labor Movement: Together We Are Stronger

(submitted by the Communications Workers of America)

This is a time of opportunity for our labor movement as we have, for the first time in decades, the promise of real change, restored bargaining rights through the Employee Free Choice Act, real health care reform, and the start of rebuilding our economy and building a society where workers have a place at the table.

It has never been more important for the union movement to be united so that we can take full advantage of these opportunities. The AFL-CIO unions, the Change to Win (CTW) unions and the National Education Association (NEA) worked together to elect President Obama and Vice President Biden, a House of Representatives with a Speaker and strong majority that support working families, and a Senate that gives Labor the first real opportunity in years to advance needed legislation without the threat of a filibuster.

The historic accomplishments of the 2008 labor get-out-the-vote effort showed what can be done working together, thus laying the groundwork to achieve labor reunification that already was underway. The National Education Association, with more than three million members, already has been working with central labor councils and other union organizations.

A united labor movement – with the NEA as a full partner – can only increase our effectiveness in states and communities and enable such a coalition that is 16 million members strong to speak with a single voice. We would be stronger, no matter if we are working in our communities through central labor councils, lobbying state legislatures, or taking our message to the Capitol and the White House.

The first steps are underway with representatives from the AFL-CIO, CTW and NEA establishing a National Labor Coordinating Committee which has been meeting and working toward unification as well as passage of the Employee Free Choice Act.

We need a labor movement that can speak and act nationally on the critical issues facing working Americans, one that will create the political and economic climate that enables working families to thrive.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in order to change the nation and create a society in which workers have a real voice and a seat at the table, the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO calls on the labor movement to change itself, which means exploring new ways for the AFL-CIO, CTW and NEA to work together and support each others campaigns; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the unions of the MTD will work together whenever possible with the AFL-CIO, CTW and NEA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD shows support for the continued discussions to join the AFL-CIO, CTW and NEA with the goal of creating a unified labor movement that advances the interests of all working people.

US Navy Shipbuilding

The need for a strong, vibrant U.S. Navy fleet was never more evident than when pirates tried to take the union-crewed, U.S.-flag commercial vessels *Maersk Alabama* and *Liberty Sun* this spring.

While the crews did their very best to fight off the attackers, it took the presence and the might of the U.S. Navy – in the form of the *USS Bainbridge* – to finish the job.

Since the founding of the country, the U.S.-flag merchant marine has depended upon the U.S. Navy for protection on the high seas so America's international trade could proceed without threat or restrictions. That mutual alliance could be in trouble if the U.S. Navy fleet continues to shrink.

At its present build-and-replace rate, the U.S. Navy fleet recently fell below 300 ships and could drop beneath 200 within 20 years. In the meantime, both the Chinese and Russian fleets are increasing their fleets and each could surpass the number of vessels within the U.S. Navy in the near future.

Realizing something has to be done, bipartisan coalitions within the Congress have devised plans to provide for a 313-vessel U.S. Navy fleet. Outside support groups like the Navy League have endorsed these proposals. Yet, the current fiscal year budget does not provide enough funding to replace the vessels being retired. In fact, during this decade, the annual build rate has been between four to six vessels – not nearly enough to keep up with ships being decommissioned.

Congressman Gene Taylor (D-MS), chairman of the House Seapower and Expeditionary Forces Subcommittee, is taking the lead on Capitol Hill in calling for adequate funding for a 313-vessel fleet. "I am disappointed with the ever-changing shipbuilding plan," Taylor declared. "We have been told for the past two years that the key to efficiency is stability. I agree. However, there is nothing stable in this shipbuilding plan."

The MTD concurs. For years, the Department has noted with alarm the decreasing number of vessels within the U.S. Navy fleet. Not only does this affect the security of U.S.-flag merchant vessels at sea, it also affects the economic stability at home as trained workers don't have the jobs to maintain their skills. As we know, U.S. Navy vessels are built in domestic shipyards. However, without the funds to keep the yards operating and workers earning an income, tax revenues from these sources dry up.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils urge the Congress and Obama administration to provide sufficient funding for a U.S. Navy fleet of 313 vessels, the rate needed to ensure America is able to meet its security obligations around the world.

World War II Veterans' Benefits

"The Greatest Generation" they have been called.

"The People Who Saved Democracy for the World" is another term that has been used.

We are talking about the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, nurses, doctors and others who donned their country's uniform during World War II. In Asia, Africa and Europe, they beat back fascist regimes to liberate millions upon millions of people. They dodged bombs, torpedoes and bullets risking their lives to save others.

The "they" in the previous sentence also includes the members of the U.S. Merchant Marine. Just days after the attacks on Pearl Harbor and the Philippines, U.S. citizen mariners sailed from what they thought were friendly Atlantic and Gulf harbors only to have their vessels blown from underneath them by German U-boats.

Yet, many of these men returned to sea, knowing the dangers that awaited them. They were among the first casualties of the war. Despite all this, they continued to climb the ladders of their ships to deliver the goods around the world for the G.I.s.

They faced the dangers of the North Atlantic, the Murmansk Run and the South Pacific. They were fired at by destroyers and battleships. They were bombed from above and torpedoed from below. And, as the classic poster of that era stated, "You bet, I'm going back to sea."

Some were too young to join the military. Others were too old. Some were rated 4-F by military doctors. But all of them wanted to serve their country.

When the war was over, merchant mariners had the second highest fatality rate, second only to the U.S. Marine Corps. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill called them "Heroes in Dungarees." General Dwight Eisenhower noted, "Every man in this Allied command is quick to express his admiration for the loyalty, courage and fortitude of the officers and men of the Merchant Marine."

When the war was over, those who served returned home as veterans and received the benefits of the G.I. Bill to allow them to return to normalcy. All, that is, except the members of the merchant marine.

After decades of protest and battling administrative red tape, the MTD with the maritime unions in 1988 finally obtained veterans status for merchant mariners who served between December 7, 1941 and August 15, 1945. Along with being considered a veteran, the mariners were entitled to have a flag on their casket and to purchase a medal. While being a victory, it still left out those who sailed until

December 31, 1946, the end-date used by the G.I. Bill for World War II status. (The date for merchant mariners was later amended to December 31, 1946.)

Recognizing that merchant mariners faced many of the same hardships as those who served in uniform, Rep. Bob Filner (D-CA) has proposed legislation to honor those few still with us who sailed during World War II by offering them or their surviving spouses \$1,000 a month. "We are here today to rectify the improper denial of G.I. Bill benefits and to find a way to compensate them, more than 60 years later, for their heroic deeds," Filner stated upon filing the Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act.

The bill cleared the House of Representatives in 2007 but died in the Senate committee process. Congressman Filner reintroduced the bill this year. Again, it passed the House. And, again it is awaiting Senate action.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils urge the Senate of the United States to pass the Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act as a final tribute to the brave and selfless deeds of those who supplied the goods overseas during that war.

Economic Recovery

(submitted by the International Association of Machinists
and Aerospace Workers)

The first flicker of the first glimmer of hope that the economic downturn that has beset the nation during the last two years may be appearing on the horizon.

No, we are not talking about the bailed-out bankers again passing out obscene bonus checks to those who put us in this downward spiral.

What we have started to see is an ever-so-slight reduction in the unemployment rate and the first effects of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus package reaching the level of working families.

America just faced an economic crisis that came very close to sending the country into another Great Depression. American workers have been dealing with the loss of good-paying jobs throughout the decade. In fact, for many of them, the old saying holds true: A recession is when your neighbor is out of work; a depression is when you are out of work. But it took the banking crisis to make the whole country realize much more was at stake.

Unlike the Great Depression, Congress and the Obama administration reacted – pumping up financial institutions (despite their bad investments) and passing the stimulus package.

Many of us in the Labor Movement think this is a good start. But more – much more – needs to be done.

Jobs should be the mantra for any policy maker looking to restore the nation's economy. As jobs are eliminated month after month, consumption falls, retail sales shrink, more homes face foreclosure and tax revenues decline sharply. The official unemployment rate hovers just below 10 percent, but the long-term rate is much higher.

The U.S. government for many years has spent hundreds of billions of dollars annually on private sector labor, goods and services. With the passage of the stimulus act, billions more will be spent on equipment, labor and services for “shovel-ready” projects involving the nation's infrastructure. Such government expenditures ought to maximize efforts to reinvigorate the manufacturing sector, which has been decimated over the years. This won't happen unless the Congress and the White House implement a recovery program by utilizing strong measures to ensure that expenditures directly contribute to domestic employment.

The concept of using government programs to directly promote job creation is hardly novel. One of the government responses to the Great Depression was the

enactment of the Buy American Act in 1933, which required the federal government to support domestic workers by purchasing goods made in the U.S.

It is not adequate, however, merely to adopt well-intentioned domestic sourcing laws. Despite its intent, vaguely written waivers to the Buy American Act create huge loopholes through which jobs can be exported to other countries and paid for by U.S. taxpayers. While grounds for a waiver can include such items as the cost of a domestic product is unreasonable or the product is not available in sufficient quantity, there is one factor that is not considered when granting a waiver: the impact on American workers.

Federal agencies and state and local governments must be held accountable for their decisions with respect to domestic sourcing, particularly if a decision to waive domestic sourcing involves funds provided by the newly enacted stimulus package.

The federal government needs to embrace wholeheartedly the goal of creating good jobs in the United States as an example to others. Just last month, General Electric announced it was adding new work to union-contracted facilities in New York and Kentucky. According to *The New York Times*, its CEO said the company was putting its money where its mouth was in terms of making America a manufacturing base again.

As noted above, both the stimulus package and announcements like GE's are good starts. But, much more is needed to get Americans back to work in order to turn the economy around.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils continue the never-ending effort to promote American workers as the most skilled, best trained in the world, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils push the Obama administration and the Congress to enact another stimulus bill to repair America's infrastructure which would get more people back to work, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils do all within their power to promote Buy American policies as another method to improve the economy.



**AFFILIATES
OF THE
MARITIME TRADES DEPARTMENT, AFL-CIO**

Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union

International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers

Communications Workers of America

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

International Union of Elevator Constructors

International Union of Operating Engineers

International Association of Fire Fighters

Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers International Union, AFL-CIO/CLC

International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers

International Longshoremen's Association, AFL-CIO

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association

United Mine Workers of America

International Union of Allied, Novelty and Production Workers, AFL-CIO

Office and Professional Employees International Union

International Union of Painters and Allied Trades of the United States and Canada

Operative Plasterers' and Cement Masons' International Association of the United States and Canada

*United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and
Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada*

Seafarers International Union of North America

Sheet Metal Workers' International Association

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees

United Steel, Paper & Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial & Service Workers International Union

Transportation • Communications International Union/IAM