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# 2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL | FEBRUARY 21-22, 2019

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## ***PRESERVING MIDDLE CLASS JOBS & RETIREMENT SECURITY***

(Submitted by the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union)

For more than three years, the MTD-affiliated Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM) has been engaged in an aggressive national and international campaign to protect the jobs and retirement security of thousands of its members employed at Nabisco, a division of Mondelez International.

Through decades of changing corporate ownership, Nabisco's executive leadership has pursued a corporate strategy of closing and drastically downsizing unionized plants in the United States and Canada, and moving that production to Mexico.

With the active support of the Labor Movement – including the MTD – and progressive organizations throughout the U.S., the BCTGM launched a campaign to educate the public and consumers about the company's anti-union and immoral actions.

The union launched a "Check the Label" campaign to educate consumers about the importance of purchasing Nabisco products made in the United States and rejecting Nabisco products produced in Mexico.

The BCTGM then initiated the "Nabisco 600" speaking tour, featuring laid-off workers from Nabisco's Chicago bakery telling their personal stories to concerned citizens, union members, retirees, college students and religious organizations about losing their good, middle-class jobs.

In March 2017, the AFL-CIO Executive Council – citing the high-profile brands of the company, the current political environment that has shed light on the inequities of unfair trade deals (including NAFTA), and the company's

blatant attack on unionized workers – voted unanimously to designate the BCTGM’s Nabisco campaign as its first “Solidarity” campaign.

In 2018, during national negotiations on a new collective bargaining agreement covering nearly 2,000 workers at Nabisco bakeries in the United States, the company illegally withdrew from the multiemployer B&C Pension Fund. This egregious action by the company, which has been a part of the B&C Pension Fund since its inception more than 60 years ago, threatens the retirement security of thousands of Nabisco/Mondelez retirees and active employees.

In part because of Nabisco/Mondelez’s attack on the union multiemployer pension plan, the BCTGM is actively engaged in the effort to support comprehensive federal legislation that would provide solvency for multiemployer pension plans.

The BCTGM’s Nabisco campaign has achieved extraordinary success to date. The foundation of this success is labor solidarity. Ultimate victory for the BCTGM in this campaign will be a victory for the entire Labor Movement, and workers at all multi-national corporations that seek to outsource good, middle-class union jobs and/or eliminate the retirement security of its dedicated workforce.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils reaffirm our unwavering support for our Sisters and Brothers of the BCTGM in its campaign against Nabisco/Mondelez.

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## ***CARGO PREFERENCE***

**W**hy does a vital component of the U.S.-flag maritime industry that has been called a jobs creator, an economic booster and a true lifesaver for families living in impoverished nations have to fight constantly to maintain its relevance?

Year after year, America's cargo preference laws come under attack. It could be a full frontal assault from members of Congress or even a White House to eliminate or transfer funds. Or it could come from subtle changes to governmental policies.

However the attacks occur, the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils remain vigilant, while continuing the offensive of educating all involved in the importance of the nation's various cargo preference laws.

Overall, cargo preference requires shippers to use U.S.-flag vessels to move certain government-impelled, ocean-borne goods. The one most recognized is the highly successful Food for Peace initiative enacted in 1954. Also known as PL-480, Food for Peace places American-grown grain and food commodities aboard U.S.-crewed, U.S.-flag ships and sails these goods all over the world to people in need. American mariners serve as goodwill ambassadors when their vessels unload packages marked "USAID from the American people."

Despite the program's benevolence, Congress and the Obama Administration approved a reduction from 75 percent of goods carried aboard U.S.-flag vessels to 50 percent while also diverting actual dollars used to grow and transport cargo to foreign non-governmental operations. This resulted in a loss of at least 25 ships from the U.S. merchant fleet and hundreds of American jobs.

Other cargo preference programs include the Cargo Preference Act of 1904 (which dictates that 100 percent of military cargo be shipped aboard U.S.-

flag vessels) and Public Resolution 17 from 1934 (which states all cargo generated by the U.S. Export-Import Bank be carried aboard U.S.-flag ships unless granted a waiver by the U.S. Maritime Administration).

In an opinion piece published by *The Hill* on October 8, Alan Kaplan, president of the Navy League of the United States, wrote: “Cargo preference programs, which do so much good for relations with other countries, also help guarantee our ability to wage war. By requiring agriculture cargoes are shipped under the American flag, these programs make significant investments in our U.S.-flag fleet and mariner pool. This program also supports our wider national security goals via the projection of American power abroad; with bags of American-grown food labeled ‘from the American people,’ onboard American ships, the message of our support, and worldwide presence, cannot be missed.”

We could not have said it better.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils will continue the fight to preserve and strengthen the nation’s current cargo preference laws to keep American mariners working aboard U.S.-flag ships around the world.

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## ***INCLUDING THE HUMAN ELEMENT AS TECHNOLOGY MOVES FORWARD***

When we gathered for our convention in 2017, the novelty of totally autonomous vessels sailing the world's waterways was beginning to move from science fiction to the realm of reality. As we meet here today, several European-based firms currently are testing crewless vessels.

If we have learned one thing over the years, it is that you cannot stop progress. In our industry, the norm 30 years ago provided crews on containerships and tankers somewhere in the range of 35 to 40 mariners top to bottom. Today, as technology develops into automated systems, crew sizes for vessels three-to-four times larger are in the 18-22 range.

Automation should be a tool to assist workers in making their jobs safer and more efficient – not a means to replace the worker. But we see automated systems being used together to do that very thing, replace the worker. The recently published U.K. Maritime Growth Study and Maritime in 2050 estimates that by 2030 as many as eight million jobs across all commercial sectors will be lost due to increased use of robotics.

In October, the delegates to the International Transport Workers' Federation Congress stood in solidarity to demand that workers and the need for jobs be a part of the discussion regarding automation. Delegates viewed with deep suspicion the concept that all modes of transportation (sea, air, rail and highway) could be operated without the control of humans. Never mind the initial concerns regarding safety (as we've already seen in early fatalities of driverless automobiles), how will workers find new jobs?

As systems and technology evolve, so must workers and their unions. We need to identify the new opportunities that present themselves. We must develop and provide training and education to prepare our members for these new opportunities. To be able to do this, we – Labor, the workers –

must be part of the discussion on how to keep our members relevant so they can evolve with the technology and secure their future work. To date, technology developers have left Labor and workers out of the discussion. It is time we demand to be part of this discussion.

Automation isn't just affecting transportation. After the tremendous success of last year's "One Job Should Be Enough" campaign by hotel workers at Marriott properties, some hotels have started testing robots to replace housekeepers

These and many other examples are a primary concern of the AFL-CIO's Future of Work study. The Labor Movement wants to make sure people and their needs are considered and understood as change continues to affect everyday life.

In 2017, MTD convention delegates adopted a resolution entitled "Automation" which sought "new technologies being introduced into our industry are done with safety in the forefront of planning, and... to stand for our members and other workers to make sure they reap the benefits of such change and are not cast overboard."

These positions remain a focus for the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils. The human element must be as important as financial factors and convenience when change is considered and implemented.

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## ***FIGHT FOR AT&T WORKERS***

(Submitted by the Communications Workers of America)

The Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils strongly support the efforts of thousands of workers employed by AT&T Legacy T and AT&T Midwest to win the jobs and employment security that the company and politicians promised them.

In 2017, Congress passed and the President signed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The measure's supporters promised that this bill, which slashed corporate taxes, would end the offshoring of jobs and give every household a \$4,000 raise. AT&T lobbied for its passage as well as promising 7,000 jobs for every \$1 billion it received in tax cuts.

After the bill became law, big corporations like AT&T experienced a massive windfall in tax benefits. Starting in 2018, AT&T received a \$3 billion annual increase in cash profits due to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Instead of creating the jobs the company promised, AT&T has cut more than 10,000 union jobs since the tax cut was enacted. Instead of ending the offshoring of jobs, AT&T continues to maintain call center operations in places like the Philippines where workers earn \$1.60 per hour. In addition, the company opened a 1,000-person call center in Mexico and expects to expand that center to 5,000 jobs.

AT&T workers in the U.S. are demanding answers. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has failed on its own terms. Corporations took the windfall while American workers continue to lose good, middle-class jobs, especially in the Midwest.

It is time for answers. Congress should conduct rigorous oversight of this tax-cut swindle. It is time for Congress to investigate companies like AT&T and demand to ask: 'Where are the jobs?' The American people deserve answers. And AT&T employees deserve a fair contract with the jobs that were promised.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils will continue to stand in solidarity with our CWA Sisters and Brothers fighting for just and fair contracts at AT&T.

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LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL | FEBRUARY 21-22, 2019

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## ***U.S. EXPORT-IMPORT BANK***

The Export-Import Bank, also known as the Ex-Im Bank, should be hard at work offering loan services to U.S. exporters and other business customers looking to create and ship American-made goods in the global market. Instead, the bank remains unable to offer loans larger than \$10 million, due to a lack of the required number of executive board members to maintain a quorum.

After 81 years of continual service, the bank was shuttered in June 2015 as Congress allowed its charter to expire without an extension. This reduced the functionality of the bank to a fraction of its full potential, only allowing the bank to service existing loans.

While the Ex-Im Bank was reauthorized in December 2015, bank opponents have blocked every attempt to hold a confirmation vote on the its new executive board members. Meanwhile, the pipeline remains clogged with loan applications and projects that the Ex-Im Bank cannot help finance until its executive board members are allowed to take their seats.

Last month, Fred Hochberg - the Ex-Im Bank Chairman from 2009-2017 - wrote a letter to the editor of the *New York Times* to clarify the status of the bank.

Hochberg said, “The Republican-controlled Senate, and in particular Senators Pat Toomey and Richard Shelby, have blocked confirmation votes on Trump administration nominees for chairman, board and inspector general. Without those confirmations, the agency lacks a quorum to support financing for United States exports and jobs... the Senate needs to vote to confirm the board.”

It’s worth mentioning that the Ex-Im Bank does not cost taxpayers a single cent. Instead, it actually reduces the national debt by transferring millions of dollars in receipts to the U.S. Treasury. The bank’s loans also allow

American businesses to hire additional American workers, as well as sell their goods internationally, increasing the nation's exports.

Additionally, all goods funded through the Ex-Im Bank must be transported aboard American-crewed, U.S.-flag vessels. So, the Ex-Im Bank not only benefits the nation's bottom line, it also is good for national security by sustaining the U.S. Merchant Marine and American-flag vessels.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils believe the Ex-Im Bank is an economic boon, a job creator, and a symbol of America's trading power with the rest of the world. For the sake of labor, the economy and the free market, we need to turn the lights back on at the bank and help American exporters compete globally once again. It is time for the Senate to vote to confirm the Administration's nominees for the Ex-Im Bank's Executive Board.

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LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL | FEBRUARY 21-22, 2019

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## ***JONES ACT: MORE VITAL THAN EVER***

Without question, one of the highlights of last year's MTD Executive Board meeting was the formal announcement by Seafarers' Rights International Executive Director Deirdre Fitzpatrick that her organization had completed a years-long study on cabotage laws around the world.

Fully released last September, the study revealed that 91 countries – representing 80 percent of the world's coastal United Nations maritime states – maintain some form of cabotage law. The report states that these laws are not identical, and describes the Jones Act as the model for others. It also demonstrates that cabotage laws exist across all political, economic and legal systems.

Last summer featured a major study specifically focusing on America's freight cabotage law and Puerto Rico. Economists from Boston-based Reeve & Associates and San Juan-based Estudios Técnicos, Inc. on July 18 released a joint report, "The Impact of the Jones Act on Puerto Rico," that concluded the Jones Act has no impact on either retail prices or the cost of living in Puerto Rico.

In addition, the report found that the state-of-the-art maritime technology, Puerto Rico-focused investments, and dedicated closed-loop service offered by Jones Act carriers provide a significant positive economic impact to the island, at freight rates lower or comparable to similar services to other Caribbean Islands.

These findings factually shot down claims from Jones Act opponents, who seemingly blame the time-tested law for every problem under the sun and whose main strategy apparently is to repeat lies loudly and often.

Nevertheless, attacks on the Jones Act continue, both in the commonwealth and on Capitol Hill. Most visibly, the Cato Institute is waging an open campaign to weaken or repeal the law, one which is vital to America's

national, economic and homeland security. In fact, it sponsored a lightly attended forum a few months ago featuring none other than former FMC chairman Rob Quartel, an avowed enemy of the Jones Act.

For years if not decades, the most common attacks on the Jones Act focused on the U.S.-build provision. This has long been seen as the proverbial “camel’s nose under the tent,” and the MTD has been at the forefront of successfully beating back those misguided efforts.

Today, however, Puerto Rico is front and center. Since our last meeting, we’ve contended with everything from harmful proposed resolutions to threats of legislation that would exempt Puerto Rico from the Jones Act, either for a few years or permanently.

In a few isolated cases, we’ve learned that some of the efforts to weaken or kill the Jones Act simply are based on a misunderstanding of the facts. In those instances, our movement and our industry collectively have done solid work in educating people and moving them to the truthful side of this issue.

Far more often, however, the organizations and individuals behind the attacks are just looking to score political points, and/or harm the U.S. Merchant Marine and American-flag operators while boosting foreign flags. They don’t let facts stand in the way.

The facts are that the Jones Act has served the best interests of the United States for almost a century. It helps maintain nearly half-a-million American jobs by requiring that cargo moving between domestic ports is carried aboard vessels that are crewed, built, flagged and owned American.

Fortunately, many supporters recognize the value of this venerable law. To cite just one recent example, here’s what the Congressional Black Caucus Institute’s 2019 Annual Report has to say: The Jones Act “keeps well-paying maritime jobs in American hands and serves as a homeland security force multiplier. Mariners on domestic vessels are fully vetted and credentialed U.S. citizens that serve as extra eyes and ears on the water, helping report and deter threats to homeland security. The U.S. Military Sealift Command depends on the country’s mariners to provide quick mobilization of sealift capacity in the event of a national emergency, and the Department of Defense has consistently emphasized the military importance of a strong domestic shipbuilding industry. In addition, vessels in the U.S. domestic

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trade are subject to the full array of U.S. safety, environmental, labor, immigration and tax laws, in contrast to foreign vessels that may operate under flags of convenience to avoid labor, regulatory and tax obligations.”

Meanwhile, we would be remiss in not tipping our cap to the Seafarers International Union of Canada and the leadership of its president, MTD Executive Board Member Jim Given. Brother Given continues to lead a very successful battle to promote and protect cabotage laws north of the border. The results have included more jobs and job security for our brothers and sisters in Canada.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils will continue to invest every possible resource in the fight to protect the Jones Act and indeed to defend cabotage laws around the world.

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# 2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL | FEBRUARY 21-22, 2019

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## ***THE MARITIME SECURITY PROGRAM***

As the nation recovers from yet another government shutdown, we in the maritime community ask the following question: Does the United States have an extra \$65 billion to spend replicating a program with an annual cost of \$300 million?

We are talking about the Maritime Security Program. Since its enactment in 1996, the MSP has provided the U.S. Defense Department with access to a fleet of U.S.-crewed, U.S.-flag militarily useful vessels in times of war or national emergency.

The original legislation called for a 10-year, 47-ship program. However, it has been so successful that the capacity is now 60 vessels, and it has been renewed twice with strong bipartisan support so the MSP is scheduled to run through Fiscal Year 2025.

Of course, the government and the taxpayers who fund it don't have an extra \$65 billion hiding under the sofa cushions. That figure comes from separate reports prepared for the National Defense Transportation Association to show what it would cost the government to replicate the ship capacity provided by the MSP, and for the U.S. Transportation Command to point out the cost of duplicating the global intermodal systems supplied by U.S.-flag MSP signatories.

This is what makes the annual fight for MSP funding seem so preposterous.

Based on the program's current makeup, the federal government annually appropriates \$300 million – a total of \$5 million for each of the 60 U.S.-flag ships in the program. The maritime community – union and industry together – go to Capitol Hill each year to make sure the funding remains intact, even though the MSP has drawn nothing but praise during its more than 25 years of service to the country.

Former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis (a retired Marine general) stated, “As small as our merchant marine may be today, it is absolutely essential. It’s in every war plan that I review, I guarantee you.”

Add to that the remarks of the immediate past head of the U.S. Transportation Command, General Darren McDew: “MSP has provided access to required commercial U.S.-flag shipping assets, while also supporting the pool of merchant mariners needed to operate the Military Sealift Command’s Surge and Ready Reserve Fleet. In this way, MSP significantly contributes to the supply of merchant mariners available to serve on U.S. vessels in time of war while mitigating future risk to our national commercial capability.”

The MSP has proven itself as a cost-effective, reliable program that delivers for the nation’s armed forces around the world. It provides good jobs for well-trained, skilled American mariners who stand ready to answer the country’s call.

That is why the MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils believe it is time not only to ensure full funding for the MSP through Fiscal Year 2025, it is also time for Congress to consider extending the program and expanding its U.S.-flag shipping capacity. The United States and its troops around the globe deserve nothing less.

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# 2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

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## ***PORTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE***

In order for mariners to “deliver the goods,” it takes more than available tonnage and well-trained seafarers. There also needs to be sufficient infrastructure to support the volume of transiting vessels, as well as adequately dredged ports for vessels to maneuver.

The nation’s inland waterways are intricate and full of natural bottlenecks that make the transportation of goods difficult. One of the busiest of these thoroughfares is the Soo Locks, which serves as the gateway between Lake Superior and the lower Great Lakes. The services of the Soo Locks are critical to the transportation of goods across the Great Lakes, and are in dire need of maintenance, upgrading and new construction.

Last year, Congress approved and the administration authorized funding for a \$922 million Soo Locks project, as part of the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018. The project aims to combine two of the oldest, smaller locks into a new large structure, which will complement the existing Poe Lock that handles the thousand-footers. The future 1,200-foot facility will allow for the passage of more of these large Lakers - which make up 60 percent of the traffic through the locks – along this U.S.-Canadian waterway.

But America’s infrastructure needs go beyond widening the Soo Locks. You’d be hard pressed to find an inland waterway or port that isn’t in need of dredging. Deep-draft vessels are limited in the number of ports upon which they can call, due to insufficient dredging.

More broadly, refurbishing U.S. infrastructure supposedly has been on the agenda for decades, but you wouldn’t know it based on results. If there’s one issue that should enjoy bipartisan support, it’s the need to improve America’s roads, bridges, airports and railways, its rivers, ports and channels, and most definitely its outdated electrical grids.

We turn to a quote from AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka: “If our nation's leaders are serious about building America, they need to step up with trillions of dollars in new federal funding that supports America’s jobs, America’s resources and America’s products. And they need to uphold high labor standards and good wages and protect working people on the job. If they do, we have the most highly skilled and well-trained workforce ready to get the job done.”

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils again call on Congress, the administration and state and local governments to rebuild the nation’s infrastructure on all fronts. We continue to support the allocation of funds for the Soo Locks expansion. We will fight for the dredging necessary to open up more ports so all types of vessels may conduct business along America’s waterways.

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# 2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL | FEBRUARY 21-22, 2019

---



## ***STAND WITH PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS***

**W**hen we met last year, many MTD-affiliated unions whose membership includes public sector employees were awaiting the Supreme Court's *Janus v. AFSCME Council 31* decision.

As had been suspected, the high court struck down the ability of unions to collect agency fees to cover administrative and legal costs incurred by a local or district from those workers covered by collective bargaining but choosing not to join.

Many a pundit predicted the ruling would place a nail in the coffin of the Labor Movement.

As we have seen throughout our history, never underestimate the power and strength of workers when they are riled. Membership in the internationals that were supposed to suffer actually has increased. Young workers – seeing how their parents' income has stagnated through the decades – are forming their own locals at workplaces.

We have seen teachers come together in various states to gain support for much-needed classroom improvements. The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils have been part of “RedforEd” and “RedforFeds” movements.

Now, we are recovering from the latest attack on public employees – the historic 35-day partial shutdown of the federal government.

Just before Christmas, approximately 800,000 men and women from departments as varied as Transportation, Treasury and Homeland Security were either sent home or declared essential and forced to work without a paycheck. In addition, hundreds of thousands of contract workers also felt the sting of not having a job during the shutdown.

Media covered such stories as TSA officers sleeping in their vehicles at airports because they did not have the money for fuel to travel home to Coast Guard personnel turning to food banks to feed their families. In our industry, mariners could not acquire or renew needed documents in order to claim their jobs because the National Maritime Center and its Regional Examination Centers were closed.

The MTD is proud of its many Port Maritime Councils who came to the aid of their Brothers and Sisters in need. Efforts included the South Florida and Michigan Port Councils providing grocery gift cards for Coast Guard families, while the Hawaii Ports Council not only participated in a solidarity march through the Honolulu airport but also organized a drive-through food bank for furloughed federal workers.

Since funding was restored, federal workers are trying very hard to return to a normalcy in their lives. Yet, contracted workers still have no recourse to cover their missed paychecks.

While the shutdown was underway, teachers in Los Angeles hit the bricks to call attention to poor conditions in their public schools. Community support was essential in gaining their victory after six days. We give a shout-out to our Southern California Port Council who adopted a local elementary school to provide water, food and moral support for the striking teachers as well as the students and their families.

What has happened over the past year demonstrates yet again that public sector workers are a very vital part of their communities – be it at the local, state or federal levels. They are dedicated and proud of what they do.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils continue to stand with our Sisters and Brothers in the public sector. We urge the White House and Congress to work together to fund the federal government and not hold workers hostage. We join with others in the Labor Movement in calling for contracted workers affected by the most recent federal shutdown to recover their lost wages. And, we support our teachers and local public employees as they fight to improve and upgrade schools and other valuable community needs.

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# 2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL | FEBRUARY 21-22, 2019

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## ***DOMESTIC SHIPBUILDING***

For a concise and insightful description of what United States shipbuilding means to the country, we turn to the U.S. Maritime Administration (MarAd), which offers this message:

“U.S. shipyards play an important role in supporting our Nation’s maritime presence by building and repairing our domestic fleet. The U.S. commercial shipbuilding and repair industry also has a significant impact on our national economy by adding billions of dollars to U.S. economic output annually. The industry purchases components produced by other industries located throughout the U.S.”

In much the same way that American troops never should be forced to rely on foreign crews to deliver their vital cargo, the United States never should have to depend on another country to build its Navy vessels. Nor can America afford to risk becoming an economic hostage by losing its capacity to build cargo ships, tugboats, barges and more.

Although America’s shipyards have decreased in number over the years, there are still more than 120 facilities along all three U.S. coasts, the Great Lakes, the inland waterways system and in Alaska and Hawaii, many of them union. They simply must be preserved, and America would benefit if they expanded.

One way to achieve that goal is by taking better advantage of the Federal Ship Financing Program, commonly referred to as Title XI based on the part of the Merchant Marine Act of 1936 that established the program. Again quoting MarAd, Title XI “provides for a full faith and credit guarantee by the United States Government to promote the growth and modernization of the U.S. merchant marine and U.S. shipyards. The program ... provides U.S. Government guaranteed debt issued by (1) U.S. or foreign shipowners for the purpose of financing or refinancing either U.S.-flag vessels or eligible export vessels constructed, reconstructed or reconditioned in U.S. shipyards

and (2) U.S. shipyards for the purpose of financing advanced shipbuilding technology and modern shipbuilding technology of a privately owned, general shipyard facility located in the U.S. Under the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990, appropriations to cover the estimated costs of a project must be obtained prior to the issuance of any letter of commitments for debt guarantees.”

Note that Title XI is not a subsidy program. Also, we point out that foreign nations including Korea and China subsidize their respective shipyards to the tune of billions of dollars per year. There is simply no way to level that playing field, though that doesn't mean American yards cannot survive and thrive.

Although America currently ranks 19<sup>th</sup> in the world for commercial shipbuilding, accounting for approximately 0.35 percent of global new construction, U.S. shipbuilding and ship repair continues to be a major economic engine. It is still as critical to national security and commerce as it was in colonial times. U.S. shipyards of all sizes deliver a wide variety of commercial vessels including patrol boats, tugs, barges, ferries, ocean going container and roll-on/roll-off vessels, tankers, and oil and gas development support vessels among many others.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils recognize that shipbuilding is among the United States' most important industries, and we will treat it as such by supporting it in every possible way.

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# 2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL | FEBRUARY 21-22, 2019

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## ***KEEPING THE PROMISE TO MINERS & WIDOWS***

(Submitted by the United Mine Workers of America)

**P**resident Harry Truman issued Executive Order 9728 on May 21, 1946, which required the Department of the Interior to take possession of all bituminous coal mines in the United States and the government assumed the task of negotiating and ultimately commencing “appropriate changes in the terms and conditions of employment.”

Interior Secretary Julius Krug negotiated the National Bituminous Wage Agreement with UMWA President John L. Lewis, which was signed in the White House as Truman looked on. The historic Krug-Lewis Agreement created a Welfare and Retirement Fund, which was intended to make *...payments to miners, and their dependents and survivors, with respect to wage loss not otherwise compensated at all or adequately under the provision of Federal or State law and resulting from sickness..., permanent disability, death, or retirement....* The agreement also created a Medical and Hospital Fund.

The following year the government returned control of the mines to the owners. Every subsequent National Bituminous Coal Wage Agreement has required that signatory employers participate in and contribute to the Welfare and Retirement Fund and then the 1974 Pension Fund. Mine operators also contractually agreed to provide lifetime health care and pensions for retired and disabled miners and their surviving spouses.

To achieve this end, miners for more than 70 years exchanged less in their wallets on payday to secure dignity in retirement for themselves and their surviving spouses.

Over the years as bankruptcies and other economic shocks hit the coal industry the government recognized that it needed to keep the promise of the Krug-Lewis Agreement and play a role in guaranteeing retiree health care for those pensioners whose companies went out of business.

The UMWA wants the record to reflect our recognition and appreciation for the Maritime Trades Department and its affiliated Brothers and Sisters who have fought beside us to save the lives of our nations' coal miners. We salute you as true patriots and stewards of all that is good for humankind and the Labor Movement.

The Krug-Lewis promise is, however, only half fulfilled, because bankruptcy restructuring and dissolution has allowed coal employers that participated in the UMWA 1974 Pension Fund to end their contributions without paying any withdrawal liabilities. The national recession of 2008-09 caused the 1974 Fund, which was financed properly, to lose a substantial portion of its value with no clear path for recovery. Furthermore, a depression in the coal fields has caused tens of thousands of jobs to be eliminated, diminishing contributions to the fund at the very time the number of retirees receiving benefits is at its peak.

Coal miners have sacrificed much to energize and build our nation; more than 200,000 coal miners have been killed on the job or died as a result of black lung in the last century.

Congress has bills before it that would provide necessary financial assistance to the UMWA 1974 Pension Fund, thereby preventing its collapse. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) has introduced S. 27, the American Miners Act of 2019, while Congressman David McKinley (R-WV) has offered H.R. 935.

The MTD recognizes the needs of America's coal miners. The MTD, our affiliates and our Port Maritime Councils pledge our support to our Brothers and Sisters in the United Mine Workers of America to obtain their well-deserved pensions. We further pledge to take all necessary steps to aid in the passage of S. 279 and H.R. 935 to provide the necessary financial assistance to the UMWA 1974 Pension Fund to prevent its collapse.

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# 2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL | FEBRUARY 21-22, 2019

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## ***SUPPORT THE TROOPS & VETERANS***

The men and women who wear the uniforms of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard, including national guardsmen and reservists, do the United States proud every day. They are our sons and daughters, our sisters and brothers, our nieces and nephews.

Many of these individuals also are our own union Sisters and Brothers. They are Seafarers, Maritime Officers, Longshoremen, Ironworkers, Bakers, Plumbers, Painters, Communications Workers, Machinists and members of the other AFL-CIO affiliates – proud, card-carrying members of the Labor Movement.

Just as they have been trained to do at home, these servicemen and women perform their jobs to the best of their abilities. While doing so, they don't seek headlines or glory. They volunteer to serve in harm's way for the country they love.

Despite all that they sacrifice for the country, when they return home, they enter an environment often teeming with barriers that seemingly are just as challenging as those they left behind on battlefields and areas of conflict around the globe.

According to MilitarySpot.com, an online presence which offers resources, news, and information for active duty and retired military members, the top five challenges facing veterans today are:

- **Unemployment** - Many disabled veterans are unable to find solid work once they return home. Plus, veterans who joined the armed forces right after high school often don't have the education that their peers received, which puts them at a hiring disadvantage.
- **Homelessness** - Approximately one third of all homeless Americans are veterans. Veterans with untreated PTSD can develop alcohol and

drug addictions, which are high-risk behaviors that can lead to deteriorating mental health and homelessness. In other situations, disabled and/or unemployed veterans don't make enough money to pay a mortgage.

- **Poor Mental Health** - Unfortunately, suicide and depression rates remain high among members of the armed forces. This is in part because of the social stigmas attached to seeking mental health treatment, which leads to high rates of untreated PTSD in returning veterans.
- **Physical Injuries** - Many veterans experience debilitating physical injuries that leave them unable to work. These veterans often make claims to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), but the VA is so backed up that it often can't address an individual's applications for several months, or even years.
- **Lack of Education** - As previously mentioned, many veterans joined the armed forces right out of high school, which means they haven't had the opportunity to receive a college education. Issues like drug or alcohol addiction, untreated PTSD, poor mental health and devastating physical injuries often keep veterans from pursuing higher education. Disabled veterans also may worry that they don't have the money to afford a college education.

Besides these impediments, a host of other circumstances also makes veteran lives difficult when they return from years of faithful service to the country. The bottom line is that it should not be that way, and we—the country as a whole—should do everything in our power to positively change their fate.

The MTD has a rich tradition of supporting our men and women in uniform—both active duty and retired—and their families. It is a proud member of the Union Veterans Council. That tradition remains very much alive and applicable today.

The MTD calls upon the entire Labor Movement to work together to positively change the future for those who have given their all to protect and defend the freedoms many Americans often take for granted.

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# 2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL | FEBRUARY 21-22, 2019

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Providing for these veterans by ensuring that they have access to meaningful employment, fair and decent housing, unimpeded access to top quality medical care and educational opportunities is not only good for business; it's good for every aspect of the country. It is the right thing to do.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils proudly stand with all military veterans and those currently serving.

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## ***WORLD WAR II MARINERS RECOGNITION***

**W**ith the start of the new U.S. Congress comes an opportunity to recognize members of the Greatest Generation – specifically, the U.S. Merchant Mariners of World War II, who are officially veterans.

U.S. Rep. John Garamendi (D-CA) on January 15 introduced H.R. 550, the Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act, with U.S. Reps. Don Young (R-AK) and Susan Brooks (R-IN) joining as original cosponsors. U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) introduced the bill in the Senate simultaneously.

This legislation would award a Congressional Gold Medal, one of the highest honors in the United States, to mariners who sustained U.S. armed forces during World War II.

“Throughout the Second World War, our armed forces relied on the merchant marine to ferry supplies, cargo and personnel into both theaters of operation, and they paid a heavy price in service to their country,” said Garamendi. “The merchant marine suffered the highest per capita casualty rate in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. An estimated 8,300 mariners lost their lives, and another 12,000 were wounded, to make sure our service members could keep fighting. Yet, these mariners who put their lives on the line were not even given veteran status until 1988.”

Christian Yuhas, vice president of the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) and a chief engineer, stated, “The time has come for our nation to provide a well-deserved thank you and honor the remaining Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII with a Congressional Gold Medal. This group of unsung heroes nobly served our country by operating the ships that transported critical supplies to front lines of the war, and in doing so suffered a casualty rate higher than any other branch of the military. In fact, one out of every 26 casualties during World War II was a volunteer merchant mariner. America would not be the great nation it is today without their valiant service of

yesterday. I urge Congress to support this important bill and recognize this dwindling group of Merchant Marine Veterans that have served our nation so admirably.”

We agree. This simple but powerful gesture would be fitting, satisfying, and deeply appreciated by the mariners and their families, many of whom were members of MTD-affiliated unions.

The MTD, its affiliates and its Port Maritime Councils urge the swift passage of the Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act.