



West Coast Sailors

Official Organ of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

Volume LXXXIX No. 4



SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Friday April 17, 2026



Artemis II Completes Historic Journey Around the Moon

Humanity has taken a decisive step back into deep space as NASA successfully completed the Artemis II mission, sending astronauts around the Moon for the first time in more than half a century and signaling a new era of exploration beyond Earth orbit.

Launched from Kennedy Space Center atop the towering Space Launch System, the mission carried four astronauts aboard the Orion spacecraft on a 10-day journey that tested the limits of modern human spaceflight. The launch drew global attention, with millions watching as the rocket roared skyward, marking the first crewed mission of NASA's Artemis program.

The crew, NASA astronauts Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch, and Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen, traveled roughly 230,000 miles from Earth, venturing farther than any humans since the final missions of the Apollo program in 1972. Their trajectory took them well beyond the Moon before looping back toward Earth in a carefully planned free-return path.

Unlike the Apollo missions that achieved lunar landings, Artemis II was designed as a proving ground. The spacecraft performed a wide flyby of the Moon, allowing engineers and mission controllers to evaluate critical systems in real-world deep-space conditions. Throughout the flight, the crew conducted a range of tests, including manual piloting exercises, communications checks, and life-support system evaluations.

Inside the Orion capsule, astronauts experienced the challenges of long-duration spaceflight, including confined living quarters, microgravity, and exposure to heightened levels of cosmic radiation. NASA officials said the data collected will be essential in refining safety protocols for future missions. The crew also shared dramatic imagery during the mission, capturing sweeping views of the lunar surface and distant shots of Earth appearing as a small blue sphere suspended in darkness. Those images quickly spread across social media and

Continued on page 4

Jones Act Waiver Seen as Political Fix With Limited Impact

The Trump administration's decision to issue a 60-day waiver of the century-old Jones Act marks a significant and controversial departure from long-standing U.S. maritime policy, drawing sharp criticism from industry stakeholders who argue the move is both ineffective and damaging to the domestic shipping sector.

Announced March 18th, amid escalating global energy disruptions tied to conflict in the Middle East and the partial closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the waiver temporarily allows foreign-flagged vessels to transport fuel, fertilizer, and other commodities between U.S. ports. The administration has framed the measure as an emergency response aimed at easing supply bottlenecks and curbing rising fuel prices, which have surged alongside global crude markets.

However, those across the U.S. maritime industry contend the policy is a misguided attempt

to address a problem rooted in global supply shocks rather than domestic shipping constraints. The Jones Act, enacted in 1920, requires that cargo transported between U.S. ports be carried on American-built, owned, and crewed vessels, forming the backbone of the nation's maritime workforce and shipbuilding base.

Industry groups, including the American Maritime Partnership, have warned that the sweeping waiver risks displacing U.S. mariners and undermining national security by weakening the domestic fleet. In public statements, maritime advocates described the measure as an unnecessary concession that could erode a critical industrial base under the guise of short-term economic relief.

Economic analysis further undercuts the administration's rationale. Analysts widely agree the waiver will have negligible impact on fuel prices, with some estimates suggesting any reduction at the pump would

amount to only a fraction of a cent per gallon. This limited effect reflects the reality that transportation costs governed by the Jones Act represent only a small component of overall fuel pricing, which is driven primarily by global crude markets now destabilized by geopolitical conflict.

The timing of the decision has also drawn scrutiny. The waiver comes as the administration faces mounting political pressure over rising energy costs and inflation, raising questions about whether the move is more symbolic than substantive. Critics argue the policy sacrifices long-term maritime stability for minimal and uncertain short-term gains, effectively using the domestic shipping industry as a pressure valve for broader economic challenges.

Labor unions representing U.S. mariners have been particularly vocal, emphasizing that waivers are traditionally reserved for nar-

Continued on page 11

Geopolitics Upends Global Shipping as Strait of Hormuz Crisis Deepens

The global maritime industry is facing one of its most severe disruptions in decades, as escalating geopolitical tensions centered on the Strait of Hormuz continue to cripple trade flows, drive up costs, and inject unprecedented uncertainty into international supply chains. Widely regarded as one of the world's most critical maritime arteries, the narrow passage between the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea typically handles roughly a fifth of global oil shipments. Today, however, traffic through the strait has slowed to a near standstill, with shipping companies opting to delay voyages or reroute vessels amid mounting security concerns.

The crisis, sparked by escalating confrontation involving Iran and the United States, has rapidly transformed from a regional conflict into a global

economic threat. Tankers, container ships, and bulk carriers alike have been forced to reassess routes as risks of attacks, seizures, and naval confrontations intensify. "What we're seeing is not just disruption — it's paralysis," said one maritime analyst. "The Strait of Hormuz is effectively constrained, and that's sending shockwaves through every layer of global trade."

The situation has drawn in multiple military powers, including the United States Navy and allied forces, which have increased patrols and initiated operations aimed at securing key shipping lanes. Meanwhile, Iranian forces have signaled a willingness to challenge foreign naval presence, raising fears of further escalation. This military buildup has heightened the risk environment for commercial

shipping. Insurance premiums for vessels transiting the region have surged, in some cases multiplying several-fold, while crews face growing safety concerns. Several major shipping firms have temporarily suspended operations in the area altogether.

The ripple effects are being felt far beyond the Middle East. Global energy markets have reacted sharply, with oil prices climbing as supply routes remain constrained. Countries heavily dependent on Gulf exports are scrambling to secure alternative sources, while importers face rising costs that threaten to fuel inflation.

Beyond energy, the disruption is straining broader supply chains already weakened by years of pandemic-related shocks and regional conflicts.

Continued on page 11

Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA (USPS 675-180)



SUP and APL reach tentative MOU on non-MSP ships.

SUP Honor Roll

Voluntary contributions from the membership to the following funds:

Dues-Paying Pensioners

- Diane Ferrari.....BK#2251
- Hannu Kurppa... ..BK#3162
- Gunnar Lundeborg.....BK#4090
- Vince O'Halloran.....BK#2463
- James ClayBK#4794
- Mike WorthBK#3629
- Michael DirksenBK#2739
- Terrence LaneBK#4107
- Teofilo Rojas.....BK#3194
- Leo Moore.....BK#6492
- Duke Maringer.....BK#6518
- Lymwel GadorBK#3024
- Don Nichols.....BK#2470
- Hamilton Parone.....BK#3883

Political Fund

- Vince O'Halloran.....\$200
- Robin Colonas \$10
- Cesar Runatay \$50
- Ben Braceros.....\$50
- Sean Bane \$20
- Roy Tufono \$100
- Dave Connolly \$100
- Brendan Bohannon \$50
- William Williamson 100
- Cliff Toralba \$50
- Dave Hampton \$10

Organization/General Fund

- Ben Braceros..... \$50
- William Williamson \$100
(In Lieu Of Dues Increase)
- Douglas Boe..... \$100

West Coast Sailors

- Nick Manessiotis \$50
- Thor Erikson..... \$25

Final Departures

Edgardo Franco, Permit #18248.
Born in the Philippines in 1938. Joined SUP in 1993. Died in Washington, March 4, 2026. (Pensioner)

Membership and Ratings Committee

The Committee met on April 2, 2026 and found the following members eligible for advancement in seniority and rating stamps in the various departments.

Name and Membership	Number	Seatetime	Rating	Seniority
Jesse William	BK#3664	6 yrs.	A.B	A
Victor Frazier	B-19873	1 yr.	A.B.	B
Tony Noble	C-3151	30 days	0.S.	C
Christian Westcott	C-3152	30 days	A.B.	C

Ratings: Bosun Stamp
None

Ratings Committee: Jesus Hermsillo BK# 5885, Dmitri Seleznev BK# 7511 and Forbes Gumapac BK#3050



From left to right: Forbes Gumapac, Dmitri Seleznev, and Jesus Hermsillo served on the Membership and Ratings Committee at Headquarters on April 2nd.

National Maritime Center

Mariner Ready, Mission Steady



Upcoming Launch: E-mail Delivery of Medical Certificates

The National Maritime Center (NMC) will begin issuing medical certificates electronically via e-mail effective **Wednesday, April 1, 2026.**

This enhancement improves delivery speed, reliability, and accessibility by providing mariners with immediate access to their certificates.

What's Changing on April 1, 2026:

1. Medical certificate (no waiver) delivered via e-mail – standard delivery method.

- All new medical certificates that **do not** include a medical waiver will be delivered electronically to the mariner's e-mail address on record as the standard method of issuance.
- Certificates must be signed to be valid. It is also recommended that mariners print and maintain a signed certificate for their use.

To help mariners during this transition, mariners should ensure their current e-mail address is included on the medical certificate application. An active and valid e-mail address is required to receive a medical certificate.

2. Didn't receive your medical certificate post-launch?

- Mariners should first check the [online status tool](#) to confirm issuance status.
- If the certificate shows "Issued", contact the NMC Customer Service Center to request the certificate be resent.
- Submission of an application or affidavit is **not required** to have a certificate resent.

3. Medical certificates with medical waivers (e-mail delivery coming soon).

- Electronic delivery for medical certificates that include waivers is currently in development and is expected to be available shortly after initial implementation.
- These certificates will continue to be handled under current processes until electronic delivery is implemented.

This improvement is designed to simplify the process, reduce wait times associated with mail delivery, and provide mariners faster, more reliable access to credentials needed for employment and compliance. For more information, visit the [NMC website](#).

If you have any questions about any of the upcoming changes, contact the NMC Customer Service Center, Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST, by using the [NMC online chat system](#), by e-mailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil, or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

We are committed to providing exceptional service and anticipate this change will improve access and convenience for the mariners we serve.
Sincerely,

/P. A. Drayer/

Patrick A. Drayer
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection

SUP Meetings 2026

HQ	Branches	HQ	Branches
May 11	May 18	September 14	September 21
June 8	June 15	October 13	October 19
July 13	July 20	November 9	November 16
August 10	August 17	December 14	December 21

WELFARE NOTES

Retirement of Berit Eriksson

Berit Eriksson has conscientiously served as the Training Representative for the Andrew Furuseth School of Seamanship for the past 18 years. Her knowledge of the maritime industry was unsurpassed and helped her develop a unique rapport with the many seamen she initiated on their careers ahead. Berit, we thank you and appreciate all your hard work. We wish you happiness in retirement.

Effective April 1, 2026, we welcome **Liz Zeiger** as the new Training Representative. Liz also has a wealth of maritime experience, and we are so happy she is on board with us. **All training matters should be referred to Liz going forward. Her contact information is as follows:**

Phone: (949) 257-2951, Liz@marinerbenefits.org
PO Box 2399, Mission Viejo, CA 92690

- Michelle Chang, Administrator michelle@marinerbenefits.org,
- Wilma Alday, SUP Trusts Accountant wilma@marinerbenefits.org
- Brian Farmer, MPP & 401(k) Plans, Death Benefits brian@marinerbenefits.org
- Gina Jew, Claims gina@marinerbenefits.org
- Michael Jacyna, Eligibility michael@marinerbenefits.org
- Kyi Kyi Cho, Eligibility kyiky@marinerbenefits.org
- Hazel Ywan, SIU-PD Trusts Accountant hazel@marinerbenefits.org
- Dau Naw, SIU-PD Contribution Accountants Payable dnaw@marinerbenefits.org
- Derek Chang, SIU-PD Supplemental Benefits, Contributions derek@marinerbenefits.org
- Dan Gaipa, SIU-PD Pension Plan dan@marinerbenefits.org
- Judy Kim, SIU-PD Pension Plan judy@marinerbenefits.org
- Training Representative, Liz Zeiger 949-257-2951 liz@marinerbenefits.org
- SUP Welfare Plan 730 Harrison Street Suite 415, San Francisco, CA 94107
- Phone Numbers: 415-778-5490 or 1-800-796-8003 Fax: 415-778-5495
- SIU-PD Pension 415-764-4987 SIU-PD Supplemental Benefits 415-764-4991
- Seafarers Medical Center 415-392-3611e@marinerbenefits.org,

West Coast Sailors

Published monthly by the Sailors Union of the Pacific (an affiliate of the Seafarers International Union of North America, AFL-CIO), Headquarters, 450 Harrison St., San Francisco, CA 94105. Phone: 415-777-3400. FAX: 415-777-5088. Dispatcher: 415-777-3616. Website: www.sailors.org. Periodicals' postage paid at San Francisco. (USPS 675-180). Printed by Dakota Press Co., a Union shop. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to West Coast Sailors, 450 Harrison St., San Francisco, CA 94105.

Matt Henning,
President/Secretary-Treasurer
Editor

BRANCH OFFICES

Seattle, WA 98199
4005 20th Ave. W. Ste.115 (206) 467-7944
FAX: (206) 467-8119

Wilmington, CA 90744
533 N. Marine Ave. (310) 835-6617
FAX: (310) 835-9367

Honolulu, HI 96813
707 Alakea St., Rm. 101 (808) 533-2777
FAX: (808) 533-2778

WELFARE OFFICE

(415) 778-5490

PENSION PLAN OFFICE

(415) 764-4987

Reunification of Offshore Oversight Raises Alarms Over Safety Rollbacks

A sweeping reorganization within the U.S. Department of the Interior is drawing sharp criticism from industry watchdogs and labor advocates, who warn it could undermine hard-won safety reforms established in the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Interior officials have initiated a phased plan to consolidate offshore energy oversight under a newly created Marine Minerals Administration, effectively merging the responsibilities of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement. The restructuring brings leasing, permitting, inspections, and environmental enforcement under a single organizational umbrella, reversing a deliberate separation put in place more than a decade ago.

The original split was designed to prevent conflicts of interest between revenue generation and safety enforcement following the Deepwater Horizon disaster, which exposed systemic regulatory failures and blurred lines of authority within federal oversight. Critics now argue that reuniting these functions risks recreating

the same conditions that contributed to one of the worst environmental catastrophes in U.S. history.

Interior officials have framed the consolidation as a modernization effort, citing improved coordination and administrative efficiency. They maintain that safety and environmental protections will remain intact under the new structure. However, skeptics question whether those assurances can hold when a single agency is tasked simultaneously with promoting offshore development and policing it.

“This is a step backward,” said one former regulator familiar with post-Deepwater Horizon reforms. “You cannot serve two masters, expand offshore production and rigorously enforcing safety standards, without compromising one or the other.”

Labor representatives have also expressed concern that the change could weaken oversight at a time when offshore operations are becoming more complex. The expansion of deepwater drilling and the emergence of offshore mineral extraction, including seabed mining for critical materials, present new technical and environmental risks. Critics argue

that consolidating oversight could dilute the specialized focus required to manage those risks effectively.

Environmental groups warn that the move may also reduce transparency and accountability. By centralizing authority, they say, the Interior Department could limit independent review processes and reduce the checks and balances that were intentionally built into the post-spill regulatory framework.

“There is a reason these agencies were separated,” said an environmental policy analyst. “It was to ensure that safety decisions were not influenced by economic pressures. Reversing that structure raises serious red flags.”

The timing of the reorganization has further fueled suspicion. The offshore energy sector is under increasing pressure to expand domestic production, while also exploring new frontiers such as offshore wind integration and marine mineral development. Critics argue that consolidating oversight now may be aimed more at accelerating approvals than safeguarding operations.

Industry response has been mixed.

While some operators welcome the prospect of streamlined permitting and fewer bureaucratic hurdles, others have privately acknowledged concerns that a loss of regulatory clarity could create uncertainty and reputational risk.

The Interior Department has not provided detailed timelines for the full implementation of the Marine Minerals Administration, stating only that the transition will occur in phases. Key questions remain about staffing, resource allocation, and how enforcement independence will be preserved within the new structure.

For many observers, the central issue is whether the lessons of the Deepwater Horizon disaster are being quietly set aside in favor of administrative convenience. The consolidation may promise efficiency, but critics argue it does so at the potential cost of safety, environmental protection, and public trust, raising the specter of repeating past mistakes in an industry where the consequences of failure can be catastrophic.

Republicans Push Second Reconciliation Bill to End DHS Shutdown

Nine months after Republicans marked passage of the sweeping “One Big Beautiful Bill” with a July 4 signing ceremony, GOP lawmakers are once again turning to a powerful legislative tool to advance their agenda. Congressional leaders are now working to pass a second major measure through the budget reconciliation process, aiming to resolve the ongoing Department of Homeland Security funding impasse.

At the heart of the effort is a strategy to split DHS funding into two tracks. Republican leaders plan to use reconciliation to approve funding for immigration enforcement agencies, including U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, while advancing a separate bipartisan appropriations bill to fund the rest of the department. The approach is designed to break a 56-day shutdown that has disrupted key operations and intensified political tensions in Washington.

The use of reconciliation is central

to the GOP’s plan. The process allows certain budget-related legislation to pass the Senate with a simple majority vote, bypassing the 60-vote threshold typically required to overcome a filibuster. For Republicans, who currently hold narrow control of both chambers and the White House, reconciliation offers a rare opportunity to act without needing Democratic support in the Senate.

“This is about getting critical funding where it’s needed most,” one Republican aide said, pointing to ongoing concerns over border security and immigration enforcement. By prioritizing ICE and CBP funding, GOP leaders argue they are addressing what they see as urgent operational needs, even as broader negotiations over DHS spending remain stalled. Still, the path forward is far from certain. Reconciliation bills must comply with strict Senate rules, including limitations on what provisions can be included. Any elements deemed unrelated to budgetary matters can be stripped out under the so-

called Byrd Rule, potentially complicating efforts to craft a comprehensive package.

In addition, Republicans must maintain near-unanimous support within their own ranks. With slim majorities, even a handful of defections could derail the effort. Some fiscal conservatives have already expressed concern about the cost of additional enforcement funding, while moderates may be wary of pursuing a partisan approach that sidelines bipartisan compromise.

Democrats, meanwhile, have criticized the strategy as a political maneuver that risks deepening divisions rather than resolving them. They argue that DHS funding should be addressed through a comprehensive, bipartisan agreement rather than a piecemeal approach that prioritizes certain agencies over others. The broader context underscores how frequently reconciliation has been used in recent years. Both parties have relied on the process to push through major policy initiatives when holding unified

control of government. From pandemic relief packages to tax reforms, reconciliation has become a go-to mechanism for advancing high-stakes legislation in a polarized Congress.

For Republicans, the stakes are particularly high. Successfully passing the measure could not only restore funding to key DHS components but also demonstrate their ability to govern effectively under unified control. Failure, on the other hand, could prolong the shutdown and expose internal divisions within the party.

As negotiations continue, lawmakers face mounting pressure to find a resolution. With DHS operations strained and political tensions rising, the coming weeks are likely to test whether Republicans can translate their reconciliation strategy into a legislative victory — or whether the effort will falter under the weight of competing priorities and procedural hurdles.

Trump Threatens 50% Tariffs on Countries Arming Iran

On Wednesday, March 8th President Trump escalated economic pressure tied to tensions with Iran, announcing that the United States would impose immediate 50% tariffs on imports from any country supplying Tehran with military weapons. The declaration, delivered via a post on Truth Social, came just hours after the president agreed to a tentative two-week ceasefire with Iranian leaders, underscoring the volatile and often contradictory nature of his foreign policy approach.

The sweeping tariff threat, which Trump said would include “no exemptions,” left major questions unanswered, including which nations would be targeted and under what legal authority the administration would act. The lack of detail sparked immediate concern among trade experts, lawmakers, and global markets already rattled by months of uncertainty surrounding U.S. economic policy.

Critics were quick to point out that

Trump’s announcement appears to conflict with a recent ruling by the Supreme Court of the United States, which in February struck down his use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to justify sweeping global tariffs. That decision dealt a significant blow to the administration’s trade strategy, forcing a lower court to order refunds totaling approximately \$166 billion in tariffs collected over the past year.

Legal analysts say any attempt to revive similar measures could face swift challenges. “The administration is on shaky ground,” said one trade attorney familiar with the ruling. “Without clear statutory authority, imposing tariffs of this magnitude, especially tied to national security claims already rejected by the courts, would likely trigger immediate litigation.”

The policy also risks inflaming tensions with key U.S. trading partners. Countries suspected of maintaining

defense relationships with Iran include major economies that play central roles in global supply chains. A blanket 50% tariff could disrupt imports ranging from industrial components to consumer goods, raising costs for American businesses and consumers alike.

Beyond legal hurdles, economists warned that the move could deepen global trade fragmentation at a time when markets are already strained by geopolitical instability in the Middle East. The timing, just hours after the ceasefire announcement, has fueled confusion about the administration’s broader strategy toward Iran, with some observers questioning whether the tariff threat could undermine fragile diplomatic progress.

Supporters of the president argue that the tariffs are a necessary tool to deter foreign governments from enabling Iran’s military capabilities. They contend that economic pressure has historically

been one of Washington’s most effective levers in curbing adversarial behavior.

Still, even some allies within Trump’s party expressed unease about the scope and execution of the proposal. Lawmakers have increasingly voiced concern over the administration’s reliance on unilateral trade actions, particularly after the court rebuke earlier this year.

International reaction was swift, with several foreign officials signaling that retaliatory measures could be considered if the tariffs are implemented. Trade experts warned that such a cycle could quickly spiral into a broader economic confrontation, further destabilizing an already fragile global economy.

As the administration moves forward, the central question remains whether Trump can translate his latest threat into enforceable policy, or whether it will become the latest flashpoint in an ongoing legal and economic battle over the limits of presidential trade authority.

White House Dismisses Pam Bondi, Citing Loss of Confidence

Pam Bondi was dismissed from her post as attorney general in an abrupt decision that sent shockwaves through Washington and raised immediate questions about the future direction of the Justice Department.

The White House confirmed the move late Thursday, offering limited explanation beyond a brief statement indicating that the president had “lost confidence” in Bondi’s leadership. The announcement ends a tenure marked by staunch loyalty to the administration and a series of controversial legal and political battles.

Bondi, a former Florida attorney general, had been a high-profile figure within the administration, frequently defending its policies on cable news and playing a central role in advancing its legal agenda. Her tenure at the Department of Justice included aggressive positions on immigration enforcement, federal oversight of state policies, and high-stakes litigation involving executive authority.

While no single reason for her removal was officially cited, multiple officials familiar with the matter said tensions had been building for weeks over disagreements in legal strategy and internal management of the department. Critics within the administration had reportedly expressed frustration over what they viewed as inconsistent messaging and setbacks in several prominent court cases.

Bondi’s departure also comes amid broader scrutiny of the Justice Department’s independence. Legal experts and former officials have repeatedly raised concerns about the politicization of the agency under her leadership, arguing that the department had too often aligned itself with political priorities rather than maintaining traditional prosecutorial norms.

In Congress, reaction to the firing fell largely along party lines. Some allies of the administration praised the decision as a necessary reset, while critics described it as further evidence of instability and political interference in the nation’s top law enforcement agency. “This kind of turnover at the highest levels of the Justice Department is deeply concerning,” said one senior lawmaker, who warned that the move could undermine ongoing investigations and erode public trust in federal law enforcement.

Bondi had also faced criticism from ethics watchdog groups over her past political ties and fundraising activities, though she consistently denied any wrongdoing. Supporters, however, argued that she brought a pragmatic and results-driven approach to the role, particularly in advancing the administration’s priorities on crime and border security.

The White House has not yet announced a permanent replacement, though an acting attorney general is expected to be named in the coming days to ensure continuity of operations. Several potential successors are already being discussed within political and legal circles, setting the stage for what could become a contentious confirmation battle in the Senate.

The leadership change arrives at a pivotal moment for the Justice Department, which is currently handling a range of sensitive matters, including national security concerns, corporate enforcement actions, and ongoing



federal investigations. Any disruption at the top could have ripple effects across these efforts.

For Bondi, the dismissal marks a dramatic turn in a career that has spanned state and federal politics. Once considered a reliable and influential figure within the administration, her sudden exit underscores the volatile nature of high-level government service under the Trump administration.

As Washington absorbs the news, attention is now shifting to who will take the helm next and whether the change signals a broader shift in legal strategy or simply another chapter in an administration defined by rapid personnel turnover.

Sanctions Loopholes Exposed as Chemical Cargo Reaches Iran

Back in February, just one week before American and Israeli warplanes launched a coordinated air campaign against Iran, a cargo vessel named *Hamouna* quietly departed Gaolan port on China’s southern coast, setting a course for the Persian Gulf. Its voyage, largely unnoticed at the time, has since become the focus of mounting scrutiny among Western intelligence officials and defense analysts.

The *Hamouna* was not alone. By the first week of April, at least four additional Iranian-operated vessels, the *Barzin*, *Shabdis*, *Rayen*, and *Zardis*, had made similar journeys. The *Zardis*, according to shipping data, remained offshore awaiting permission to dock, raising further questions about the timing and coordination of these voyages.

Western intelligence sources, supported by independent maritime tracking data reviewed by multiple outlets, believe the ships were transporting sodium perchlorate, a chemical precursor used in the production of solid rocket propellant. While not prohibited under Chinese export law, the substance plays a critical role in the manufacture of ammonium perchlorate, a key oxidizer used in ballistic missile fuel.

The shipments are particularly controversial given their timing. They occurred in the midst of an active U.S.-Israeli bombing campaign targeting Iran’s military-industrial infrastructure, including facilities linked to missile production. Critics argue that allowing such materials to flow during a period of heightened conflict undermines efforts to curb Iran’s weapons capabilities.

The chemistry involved is relatively straightforward but strategically significant. Sodium perchlorate, a stable white crystalline compound, can be chemically converted into ammonium perchlorate through established industrial processes. The resulting compound is a powerful oxidizer essential for solid-fuel propulsion systems, including those used in Iran’s Kheibar Shekan and Haj Qasem ballistic missiles. These systems are considered central to Tehran’s regional deterrence strategy.

Beijing has defended its position, stating that trade in sodium perchlorate constitutes “normal commercial activity” and emphasizing that the substance is not subject to export controls under Chinese law. Officials have not directly addressed

the specific shipments but maintain that China adheres to its international obligations regarding non-proliferation.

That explanation has done little to quell criticism in Washington and among allied governments. Arms control experts argue that the distinction between civilian and military applications in this case is largely academic. “This is a dual-use chemical with a well-documented role in missile production,” said one Western analyst. “Allowing its transfer under current conditions is, at best, irresponsible.”

The episode has also highlighted broader concerns about enforcement gaps in global non-proliferation regimes. Unlike finished weapons systems, many precursor materials fall into regulatory gray areas, enabling countries to continue

trade while technically remaining within legal boundaries. Analysts warn that such loopholes are increasingly being exploited amid rising geopolitical tensions.

For Iran, the continued inflow of chemical precursors could help sustain missile production despite sustained airstrikes on its facilities. For the United States and its allies, the shipments present a difficult challenge: how to respond to activities that may be strategically destabilizing but fall short of clear legal violations.

As the conflict continues and scrutiny intensifies, the voyages of the *Hamouna* and its sister ships underscore the complex intersection of commerce, law, and security in an era of great power competition.

Artemis II Completes Historic Journey Around the World

Continued from page 1

news outlets, rekindling public fascination with human space exploration.

Mission control teams at NASA tracked every phase of the journey, paying close attention to the spacecraft’s propulsion, navigation, and thermal protection systems. Particular focus was placed on Orion’s heat shield, which endured temperatures approaching 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit during the spacecraft’s high-speed reentry into Earth’s atmosphere. The mission concluded with a successful splashdown in the Pacific Ocean, where recovery crews swiftly secured the capsule and assisted the astronauts. Medical teams conducted initial health evaluations on board recovery vessels, confirming that all four crew members were in good condition after their journey.

Officials described Artemis II as a pivotal success that validates years of development and testing. The mission builds directly on the achievements of Artemis I, which first demonstrated Orion’s capabilities without a crew on board. Artemis II also underscores the importance of

international cooperation in space exploration. The inclusion of Canadian Space Agency astronaut Jeremy Hansen reflects a broader coalition of global partners contributing to the Artemis program, including agencies across Europe and Asia.

Looking ahead, NASA is already turning its focus to Artemis III, which aims to return astronauts to the lunar surface for the first time in decades. That mission is expected to target the Moon’s south polar region, where water ice deposits could support future long-term exploration and even serve as a resource for missions to Mars.

Beyond its technical milestones, Artemis II carries profound symbolic significance. It represents not only a return to the Moon, but also a renewed ambition to push humanity farther into the solar system. As one NASA official noted, the mission is “not just about revisiting the past, but building the foundation for the future.” With Artemis II now complete, the path forward is clearer than ever: humans are once again voyaging into deep space, with the Moon as the first stop on a much longer journey.



Ventrell Johnson, Bosun Manjula Kondapperuma, Edward Hervias, Steven Ryley, Napoleon Ramon and Joel Tetrault aboard the *APL Grant*.

Ashes of a City: Remembering the 1906 San Francisco Fire

The morning of April 18, 1906, began like any other in San Francisco, cool, fog-laced, and bustling with early risers. Within minutes, however, the city would be transformed into a scene of devastation as one of the most destructive urban disasters in American history unfolded.

At 5:12 a.m., a powerful earthquake struck along the San Andreas Fault, violently shaking buildings, snapping water mains, and toppling infrastructure across the region. Though the quake itself caused widespread damage, it was the fires that followed that would bring the greatest destruction. As gas lines ruptured and stoves overturned, flames ignited across the city. With the water system crippled, firefighters struggled to contain the infernos. Over the next three days, fires burned unchecked, driven by strong winds and fed by wooden structures that dominated much of the city's architecture.

Entire neighborhoods were reduced to ash. The downtown district, once the commercial heart of the city, was almost completely destroyed. Landmarks such as San Francisco City Hall collapsed or were consumed by flames. Makeshift firebreaks were attempted, including the use of dynamite to demolish buildings in the path of the fire, but these efforts often

backfired, unintentionally spreading the blaze further.

As chaos unfolded, tens of thousands of residents fled their homes, carrying whatever belongings they could manage. Many sought refuge in open spaces such as Golden Gate Park and the Presidio, where temporary camps sprang up almost overnight. The U.S. Army played a critical role in maintaining order and providing aid, distributing food and supplies to displaced residents. By the time the fires were finally extinguished on April 21, the scale of the disaster was staggering. More than 28,000 buildings had been destroyed, and an estimated 225,000 people, over half the city's population, were left homeless. While official death tolls at the time reported around 700 fatalities, modern estimates suggest the true number may have exceeded 3,000.

The disaster marked a turning point for San Francisco. In the years that followed, the city undertook a massive rebuilding effort, embracing new building codes and urban planning strategies designed to reduce the risk of future catastrophes. Steel-frame construction became more common, and improvements were made to the city's water and emergency response systems.

The 1906 earthquake and fire also had



broader implications for the emerging field of seismology. Scientists used data from the event to better understand earthquake behavior along the San Andreas Fault, contributing to advancements in earthquake science that continue to inform safety measures today. More

than a century later, the memory of the 1906 disaster remains deeply embedded in the identity of San Francisco. It stands as a testament to both the destructive power of natural forces and the resilience of a city that rebuilt itself from near-total ruin.

Voting Restrictions Advance Across 23 States as Federal Bill Stalls

The SAVE America Act may be on the brink of collapse in Congress, but its most controversial provisions are quietly spreading across the country, raising alarms about the future of voting access in the United States. A recent analysis by Reuters found that at least 23 states, most led by Republicans, have already moved to replicate key elements of the sweeping election overhaul championed by Donald Trump.

Despite failing to secure enough support at the federal level, the legislation's core ideas are being implemented piecemeal, effectively bypassing congressional gridlock. Since 2024, states from Wyoming to Georgia have imposed stricter voting requirements, including new proof-of-citizenship mandates that go well beyond previous standards. Where voters once affirmed their eligibility under penalty of perjury, many must now produce documentation, an added hurdle

that critics warn could disenfranchise eligible citizens.

The tightening of voter ID laws has further intensified concerns. Several states have narrowed the list of acceptable identification, excluding commonly used forms such as student IDs in favor of limited government-issued documents. Opponents argue these changes disproportionately burden younger voters, low-income individuals, and rural residents, groups less likely to have immediate access to passports or updated driver's licenses.

Perhaps most contentious is the growing use of federal databases to scrutinize voter rolls. In at least 17 states, election officials are now cross-checking registered voters against systems originally designed to verify eligibility for public benefits. While proponents frame the effort as a safeguard against non-citizen voting,

critics warn it introduces a high risk of false matches and bureaucratic error.

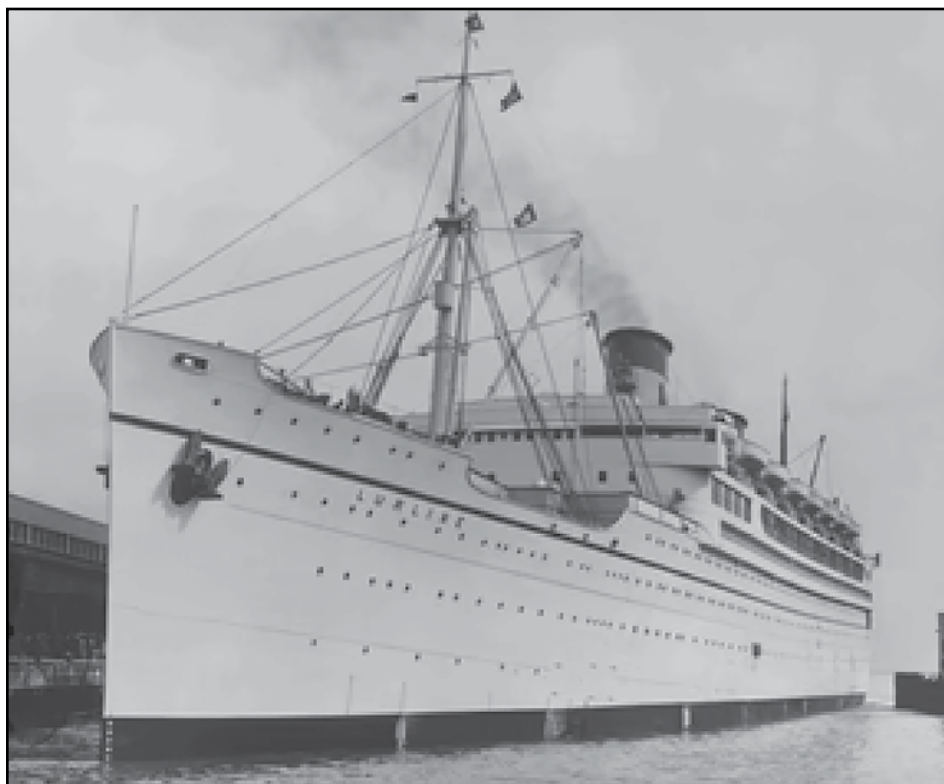
Election experts have repeatedly cautioned that such databases are not designed for voting enforcement and may contain outdated or incomplete information. A mismatch could trigger investigations or even wrongful removal from voter rolls, forcing legitimate voters to navigate complex appeals processes simply to restore their rights. For many, particularly those with limited resources, that burden could prove insurmountable.

What makes the trend more troubling, critics say, is the lack of uniform standards or oversight. With each state adopting its own version of these policies, the nation's election system is becoming increasingly fragmented. Voters in one state may face

significantly higher barriers than those in another, deepening disparities in access to the ballot.

Supporters of the measures insist they are necessary to restore trust in elections, even as documented cases of widespread voter fraud remain exceedingly rare. But detractors argue the changes are less about security and more about reshaping the electorate by making voting more difficult for certain populations.

As the November midterm elections approach, the growing patchwork of restrictive voting laws is poised to test the resilience of the U.S. electoral system. Even if the SAVE America Act never becomes law, its legacy may already be taking root—one state at a time, and with consequences that could extend far beyond a single election cycle.



This vintage black-and-white photograph captures the S.S. Lurline docked, viewed from the bow. The image showcases the elegance and grandeur of mid-20th-century ocean travel, highlighting the ship's sleek design and the port environment. The S.S. Lurline was one of Matson Lines' premier passenger ships, serving the West Coast to Hawaii route. Launched in 1933, it became synonymous with luxury and sophistication in transpacific travel.



USNS Seay crew taking a picture shortly after a life boat test. From left to right: Bosun Sherwin Bongayan, Haiden Isberto, OS Waylen Roberts, Artemus Ervin, Aaron Ousley, and OS Faisal Zain (kneeling).

2026 UNION VOTER GUIDE



STATEWIDE CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Governor	TRIPLE : Tom Steyer / ... / Antonio Villaraigosa / Katie Porter (D)
Lt. Governor	Fiona Ma (D)
Secretary of State	Shirley Weber (D)
Attorney General	Rob Bonta (D)
Controller	Malia Cohen (D)
Treasurer	Eleni Kounalakis (D)
Insurance Commissioner	No Recommendation
Superintendent of Public Instruction	DUAL: Al Muratsuchi / Anthony Rendon
Board of Equalization District 1	Nelson Esparza (D)
Board of Equalization District 2	Sally Lieber (D)
Board of Equalization District 3	Mike Gipson (D)
Board of Equalization District 4	Tom Umberg (D)

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS

DISTRICT	CANDIDATE	DISTRICT	CANDIDATE
1	Mike McGuire (D)	27	George Whitesides (D)
2	Jared Huffman (D)	28	Judy Chu (D)
3	No Recommendation	29	Luz Rivas (D)
4	Mike Thompson (D)	30	Laura Friedman (D)
5	Michael Masuda (D)	31	Gil Cisneros (D)
6	Richard Pan (D)	32	Brad Sherman (D)
7	DUAL: Mai Vang / Doris Matsui (D)	33	Pete Aguilar (D)
8	John Garamendi (D)	34	Jimmy Gomez (D)
9	Josh Harder (D)	35	Norma Torres (D)
10	Mark DeSaulnier (D)	36	Ted Lieu (D)
11	Connie Chan (D)	37	Sydney Kamlager (D)
12	Lateefah Simon (D)	38	Hilda Solis (D)
13	Adam Gray (D)	39	Mark Takano (D)
14	Aisha Wahab (D)	40	Joe Kerr (D)
15	Kevin Mullin (D)	41	Linda Sanchez (D)
16	No Recommendation	42	Robert Garcia (D)
17	Ro Khanna (D)	43	Maxine Waters (D)
18	Zoe Lofgren (D)	44	Nanette Barragan (D)
19	Jimmy Panetta (D)	45	Derek Tran (D)
20	No Recommendation	46	Lou Correa (D)
21	Jim Costa (D)	47	Dave Min (D)
22	Jasmeet Bains (D)	48	Mami von Wilpert (D)
23	No Recommendation	49	Mike Levin (D)
24	Salud Carbajal (D)	50	No Recommendation
25	Raul Ruiz (D)	51	Sara Jacobs (D)
26	Jacqui Irwin (D)	52	Juan Vargas (D)

DISTRICT	CANDIDATE	DISTRICT	CANDIDATE
2	Damon Connolly (D)	22	No Recommendation
4	Jaron Brandon (D)	24	John Erickson (D)
6	Sean Frame (D)	26	No Recommendation
8	Angelique Ashby (D)	28	Lola Smallwood-Cueva
10	Anne Kepner (D)	30	Bob Archuleta (D)
12	Nathan Magsig (R)	32	No Recommendation
14	Esmerelda Soria (D)	34	Avelino Valencia (D)
16	Melissa Hurtado (D)	36	Chris Duncan (D)
18	Steve Padilla (D)	38	No Recommendation
20	Caroline Menjivar (D)	40	Mara Elliott (D)

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY

DISTRICT	CANDIDATE	DISTRICT	CANDIDATE
1	No Recommendation	16	Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
2	Chris Rogers (D)	17	Matt Haney (D)
3	No Recommendation	18	Mia Bonta (D)
4	Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D)	19	Catherine Stefani (D)
5	No Recommendation	20	Liz Ortega (D)
6	No Recommendation	21	Diane Papan (D)
7	Amy Slavensky (D)	22	Juan Alanis (R)
8	No Recommendation	23	No Recommendation
9	Heath Flora (R)	24	Alex Lee (D)
10	No Recommendation	25	Ash Kalra (D)
11	Lori Wilson (D)	26	Patrick Ahrens (D)
12	Jackie Elward (D)	27	Brian Pacheco (D)
13	Rhodesia Ransom (D)	28	Gail Pellerin (D)
14	No Recommendation	29	Robert Rivas (D)
15	Anamarie Avila Farias (D)	30	Dawn Addis (D)
31	Annalisa Perea (D)	56	Lisa Calderon (D)
32	No Recommendation	57	Sade Elhawary (D)
33	No Recommendation	58	Clarissa Cervantes (D)
34	Charles Hughes (R)	59	Phillip Chen (R)
35	DUAL: Andrae Gonzalez / Ana Palacio (D)	60	Corey Jackson (D)
36	Oscar Ortiz (D)	61	Tina McKinnor (D)
37	Gregg Hart (D)	62	Jose Solache (D)
38	Steve Bennett (D)	63	No Recommendation
39	Juan Carrillo (D)	64	No Recommendation
40	Pilar Schiavo (D)	65	No Recommendation
41	John Harabedian (D)	66	No Recommendation
42	Deborah Klein Lopez (D)	67	No Recommendation
43	Celeste Rodriguez (D)	68	No Recommendation
44	Nick Schultz (D)	69	Josh Lowenthal (D)
45	James Ramos (D)	70	No Recommendation
46	Jesse Gabriel (D)	71	No Recommendation
47	Lella Namvar(D)	72	Chris Kluwe (D)
48	No Recommendation	73	Cottie Petrie-Norris (D)
49	Mike Fong (D)	74	Laurie Davies (R)
50	Robert Garcia (D)	75	No Recommendation
51	Rick Chavez Zbur (D)	76	Darshana Patel (D)
52	Jessica Caloza (D)	77	Tasha Boerner (D)
53	Michelle Rodriguez (D)	78	Chris Ward (D)
54	Mark Gonzalez (D)	79	LaShae Sharp-Collins(D)
55	Isaac Bryan (D)	80	No Recommendation

VOTE

TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2026

United CEO Meets Trump Amid Talk of Potential Airline Mega-Merger

The chief executive of United Airlines has held discussions with former President Donald Trump regarding the possibility of a merger with rival carrier American Airlines, according to sources familiar with the talks, raising fresh questions about consolidation in the U.S. aviation industry.

The reported conversations, which remain informal and exploratory, center on whether a combination of two of the nation's largest airlines could be structured in a way that passes regulatory scrutiny while reshaping the competitive landscape. Such a deal would create an aviation giant with an unprecedented share of domestic and international routes, potentially surpassing all other U.S. carriers in size and reach.

Neither United nor American Airlines has publicly confirmed that merger negotiations are underway. However,

industry analysts say even preliminary discussions signal a significant shift in thinking among top executives, who have historically faced stiff opposition from regulators wary of reduced competition and higher fares.

The involvement of Trump, who has maintained influence within Republican policy circles and continues to weigh in on major corporate and economic issues, adds a political dimension to the talks. Sources indicate the discussions have included potential regulatory pathways and whether a future administration might take a more favorable stance toward consolidation in the airline sector.

Any merger between United and American would almost certainly face intense scrutiny from the U.S. Department of Justice and the Department of Transportation, both of which have taken increasingly aggressive positions

on antitrust enforcement in recent years. Previous airline mergers, including Delta with Northwest and United's own merger with Continental, were approved under different regulatory climates, though not without concessions such as slot divestitures and route adjustments.

Consumer advocacy groups have already voiced concern over the prospect of further consolidation, arguing that fewer major carriers could lead to higher ticket prices, reduced service options, and diminished competition, particularly in smaller markets. Labor unions, meanwhile, may be divided, with some seeing potential benefits in increased scale and stability, while others worry about job cuts and contract renegotiations.

Proponents of a merger argue that the combined airline could achieve greater operational efficiency, invest more heavily in fleet modernization, and compete

more effectively with international rivals, particularly large state-backed carriers in the Middle East and Asia. They also point to ongoing challenges in the industry, including fluctuating fuel costs, supply chain disruptions, and evolving travel demand.

Still, the path to any formal agreement remains uncertain. Analysts note that even if United and American were to pursue a deal, it could take years of negotiations, regulatory reviews, and legal challenges before any merger is finalized, if it is approved at all.

For now, the discussions appear to be in their early stages. But the mere possibility of a tie-up between two of the nation's aviation giants is already sending ripples through the industry, prompting competitors, regulators, and travelers alike to consider what a dramatically consolidated airline market might look like.

U.S. Insurance Plan for Hormuz Shipping Raises Risk and Uncertainty

The U.S. government's plan to provide emergency insurance coverage for vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz is being framed as a stabilizing measure, but critics warn it may instead deepen the risks facing global shipping while exposing taxpayers to potentially massive losses. The proposed program would act as a financial backstop for shipowners reluctant to operate in one of the world's most dangerous maritime corridors. With private insurers scaling back coverage and war risk premiums soaring, Washington is stepping in to fill the gap. But in doing so, it may be taking on liabilities that could spiral if the conflict intensifies.

The Strait of Hormuz, bordered by Iran and Oman, is a critical artery for global energy flows, handling roughly 20 percent of the world's oil shipments. In recent weeks, escalating tensions and

military activity have turned the region into a high-risk zone, with shipping companies increasingly wary of sending vessels through the narrow passage.

Rather than reducing that risk, some analysts argue, the U.S. insurance plan could encourage more ships to enter a volatile environment that would otherwise be avoided. By shielding operators from the financial consequences of an attack or seizure, the program may create what critics describe as a "moral hazard," incentivizing behavior that increases overall exposure to danger. "There's a real concern that this shifts the burden of risk from private industry to the public," said one maritime analyst. "If something goes wrong, it won't just be shipowners paying the price, it will be taxpayers."

The scale of the potential exposure is significant. Officials have indicated the

program could provide tens of billions of dollars in coverage, a figure that underscores both the severity of the situation and the stakes involved. A single incident involving a tanker, whether due to military confrontation, sabotage, or navigational hazards, could result in losses reaching into the hundreds of millions.

Beyond financial concerns, the plan also highlights the growing inability of market forces to manage risk in geopolitically unstable regions. When insurers retreat, it typically signals that conditions have deteriorated beyond acceptable limits. Government intervention, critics argue, does not solve that underlying problem, it merely masks it.

Shipping companies themselves remain cautious. While the availability of government-backed insurance may make voyages more financially viable, it does

little to address the physical dangers facing crews and vessels. The risk of attack, detention, or collateral damage remains unchanged.

The broader implications for global trade are equally troubling. If tensions escalate further, even government support may not be enough to keep traffic flowing through the strait. Disruptions could intensify, driving up energy prices and compounding pressure on already strained supply chains.

Ultimately, the U.S. insurance initiative reflects a reactive approach to a rapidly deteriorating situation. Rather than restoring confidence, it may signal just how fragile maritime security has become in one of the world's most vital shipping lanes, and how few viable options remain to contain the fallout.

Critical Alaska Supply Hub Gets Major Upgrade as Dock Construction Begins

Construction is officially underway on a key cargo dock in Anchorage, marking a significant milestone in the long-running effort to modernize the Don Young Port of Alaska. The project is part of a sweeping \$2.7 billion infrastructure overhaul that began in 2014 and aims to secure the port's role as the state's primary supply hub for decades to come.

Rebuilding Cargo Terminal 1 commenced March 16 after Anchorage Mayor Suzanne LaFrance issued an official notice to proceed. The effort represents the largest capital construction project undertaken since Anchorage became a municipality in 1975, underscoring both

its scale and importance. City officials say the port is far more than a local asset. "It is a critical piece of infrastructure, not just for Anchorage residents, but for most residents of the state of Alaska," LaFrance said in announcing the start of construction. Approximately 75 percent of all inbound cargo to Alaska moves through the port, supporting more than \$14 billion in annual economic activity statewide.

The modernization program was launched to address severe structural concerns across the port's aging terminals, many of which have suffered from decades of corrosion and seismic wear. Engineers have warned that without replacement,

key facilities could fail during a major earthquake, posing a serious threat to the state's supply chain.

The new Cargo Terminal 1 is being designed to meet modern seismic standards and accommodate larger, more efficient vessels. Officials say these upgrades are essential as shipping demands grow and as Alaska's strategic importance increases, particularly in the Arctic and Pacific regions.

Beyond commercial needs, the port also plays a vital role in national defense logistics. Military planners rely on the facility to move equipment and fuel, making its reliability a matter of federal as well as

state concern.

Despite the progress, challenges remain. The overall price tag has climbed over the years due to inflation, evolving design requirements, and construction complexities in a harsh northern environment. Funding continues to come from a mix of local, state, and federal sources, with leaders pushing for sustained investment to keep the project on schedule. Still, officials maintain that the cost of inaction would be far greater. As work begins on this latest phase, the modernization of Alaska's most important port is no longer a distant goal, but an urgent necessity taking shape on the ground.

Maritime Piracy Incidents Drop Sharply, IMB Reports

Incidents of maritime piracy and armed robbery have fallen to their lowest levels in more than three decades, according to a new report released by the International Maritime Bureau, signaling a significant shift in global shipping security trends.

The IMB recorded just 16 incidents worldwide during the first quarter of 2026, a sharp decline from 45 cases reported over the same period in 2025 and 33 in the first three months of 2024. The dramatic drop underscores what officials describe as the growing effectiveness of coordinated international anti-piracy efforts. Of the 16 incidents documented between January and March, 14 involved vessels being boarded, while one ship

was hijacked. The cases were split almost evenly between ships underway and those anchored in port areas, highlighting that risks persist across multiple stages of maritime operations.

"It's very positive to see reported maritime piracy and armed robbery incidents fall to this level," said Michael Howlett, who credited improved reporting practices and enhanced global cooperation for the decline.

Industry analysts point to a combination of factors behind the sustained reduction. Increased naval patrols in historically high-risk regions, expanded use of onboard security measures, and better information sharing among ship-

ping companies and governments have all contributed to deterring attacks. Shipping operators have also adopted stricter protocols, including route adjustments and heightened vigilance in known hotspots.

The IMB emphasized that timely reporting of incidents remains a cornerstone of these improvements. By quickly alerting authorities and other vessels, crews help create a more responsive and coordinated security environment, making it more difficult for pirates to operate undetected. Despite the encouraging data, experts caution against complacency. Certain regions, including parts of West Africa and Southeast Asia, have historically been prone to piracy and could see fluctuations

if enforcement efforts weaken. Even a small number of incidents can pose serious risks to crews, cargo, and insurers, particularly when violence is involved.

Maritime security remains a critical concern for global trade, with roughly 90 percent of world commerce transported by sea. A sustained reduction in piracy not only improves safety for seafarers but also helps stabilize shipping costs and insurance rates, offering broader economic benefits. While the first-quarter figures represent a milestone, the IMB and industry stakeholders stress that continued vigilance and international collaboration will be essential to maintaining the downward trend.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2026

The Honorable Steve Womack
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,
and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James Clyburn
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,
and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
2083 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Womack and Ranking Member Clyburn:

We are writing to request that your Subcommittee include full funding at the authorized amount for the Maritime Security Program (MSP) in your Fiscal Year 2027 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Appropriations Bill. We also request that a defense 302(b) allocation in the authorized amount be provided to the THUD Appropriations Subcommittee to ensure sufficient funding for MSP as has been done in preceding years.

MSP is a vital component of our military strategic sealift and global response capability. It is designed to ensure that the United States has the U.S.-flag commercial sealift readiness capability and trained U.S. citizen merchant mariners available in times of war or national emergencies. MSP also ensures that the U.S. can provide our troops overseas with the supplies and equipment necessary to do their jobs on behalf of our nation.

In testimony on March 25, 2025 before the House Armed Services Committee's Readiness and Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittees' hearing – "Posture And Readiness Of The Mobility Enterprise", General Randall Reed, Commander of the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), highlighted the importance of MSP. He stated, "we fully support the Maritime Security Program, Tanker Security Program, the Jones Act and cargo preference laws that all work to ensure we have the necessary US flag capability and US merchant mariners ready to move sensitive defense material during a national emergency."

As a public-private partnership between the U.S. government and the U.S.-flag shipping industry, MSP provides the Department of Defense (DOD) assured access to privately-owned commercial shipping assets, related global intermodal systems, and the active pool of U.S. citizen mariners necessary to support America's defense objectives around the world. This cost-effective program utilizes existing U.S. maritime private sector capabilities at a fraction of the cost of what it would take if the Federal government were to replicate the vessel capacity and global intermodal systems made available to DOD by MSP contractors who continuously develop and maintain modern logistics systems for commercial and defense purposes. The cost to the Federal government of replicating just the vessel capacity is estimated at \$13 billion. USTRANSCOM has estimated an additional cost of \$52 billion to replicate the global intermodal system that is made available to the DOD by MSP participants. In contrast, the MSP, at the funding level requested, will provide DOD with U.S.-flag, U.S.-crewed militarily-useful commercial vessels and worldwide logistics systems at a fraction of the estimated \$65 billion it would cost the Federal government to do this job itself.

In closing, without a viable U.S.-flag commercial fleet and the American merchant mariners this fleet supports, the United States would be unable to deploy its military forces on a global basis and to deliver the supplies and equipment American troops need to do their job on behalf of the American people.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Trent Kelly, Chairman — Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces

Stacey E Plaskett — Member of Congress

Joe Courtney — Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier — Member of Congress

Aumua Amata Coleman — Member of Congress

Brian K. Fitzpatrick — Member of Congress

Rob Bresnahan, Jr. Member of Congress

Vicente Gonzalez — Member of Congress

Eleanor Homes Norton — Member of Congress

Vicente Gonzalez — Member of Congress

Timothy M. Kennedy — Member of Congress

Andrew R. Garbarino — Member of Congress

Timothy M. Kennedy — Member of Congress

Andrew R. Garbarino — Member of Congress

Nicole Malliotakis — Member of Congress

Jared Moslowitz — Member of Congress

Troy A. Carter, Sr. — Member of Congress

Saul Carbajal — Member of Congress

Chris Deluzio — Member of Congress

Mary Gay Scanlon — Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr. — Member of Congress

John Garamendi — Member of Congress

Rick McCormick, MD, MBA — Member of Congress

Nanette Diaz Barragan — Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch — Member of Congress

Gwen S. Moore — Member of Congress

Christopher H. Smith — Member of Congress

Robert Garcia — Member of Congress

Val Hoyle — Member of Congress

Nikki Budzinski — Member of Congress

Tony Wied — Member of Congress

Eric A. "Rick" Crawford — Member of Congress

Laura A. Gillen — Member of Congress

Chris Pappas — Member of Congress

Juan Vargas — Member of Congress

Sam Graves — Member of Congress

William R. Keating — Member of Congress

Seth Moulton — Member of Congress

Daniel Webster — Member of Congress

Nancy Mace — Member of Congress

Pete Stauber — Member of Congress

Sarah Elreth — Member of Congress

Aaron Bean — Member of Congress

Don Bacon — Member of Congress

Donald G. Davis — Member of Congress

Jen A. Kiggans — Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell — Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer — Member of Congress

Maggie Goodlander — Member of Congress

Brian J. Mast — Member of Congress

Hillary J. Scholten — Member of Congress

Seth Magaziner — Member of Congress

Kweisi Mfume — Member of Congress

Pipeline Fight Rekindled in Lower New York Bay

Environmental activists are intensifying their opposition to a proposed natural gas pipeline that would cross Lower New York Bay, urging state officials in New Jersey to reject a key permit needed for the project to move forward. At the center of the dispute is the Northeast Supply Enhancement (NESE) Project, a 23.4-mile pipeline expansion backed by Williams Companies. The project is designed to transport natural gas from shale fields in Pennsylvania to customers in New York and across New England, addressing what developers describe as growing regional energy demand.

But environmental groups say the project poses significant risks to marine ecosystems and public health, particularly due to dredging required along sections of the pipeline route. Activists are now calling on the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to deny a tidelands permit that would allow construction beneath state-controlled waterways.

"The bay is already burdened by decades of industrial pollution," said one advocate during recent protests. "Disturbing the seabed could release contaminants that have been settled for years." The debate escalated earlier this month when a public meeting scheduled for April 1 was abruptly canceled just minutes before it was set to begin. Officials cited safety concerns amid mounting pressure and demonstrations from critics, many of whom had planned to voice opposition to the project during the session.

The cancellation drew backlash from both sides. Environmental groups accused regulators of avoiding public scrutiny, while supporters of the pipeline argued that delays threaten critical infrastructure improvements. The NESE Project has long been a flashpoint in re-

gional energy policy debates. Proponents, including utility companies and some business groups, argue the pipeline would improve reliability during peak winter demand, when natural gas shortages have led to price spikes and supply constraints.

"This project is about ensuring families and businesses have access to affordable, reliable energy," a spokesperson for Williams Companies said in a statement. "We've worked to design it in a way that minimizes environmental impact." Opponents remain unconvinced, pointing to the history of contamination in Lower New York Bay and surrounding waterways. The estuary has long been impacted by industrial runoff, sewage discharge, and legacy pollutants, making any disturbance of sediments a sensitive issue.

The fight also echoes earlier disputes over dredging projects in the busy New York-New Jersey Harbor, where environmental concerns have frequently clashed with commercial and infrastructure priorities. New Jersey officials have previously denied permits for earlier versions of the NESE Project, citing water quality concerns. However, the latest proposal includes modifications that developers say address prior objections, setting the stage for another high-stakes regulatory decision.

For now, the future of the pipeline remains uncertain. The tidelands permit represents a critical hurdle, and a denial could effectively halt the project once again. As the debate continues, both sides are mobilizing for what could become a defining environmental and energy battle in the region, one that underscores the broader national tension between expanding fossil fuel infrastructure and protecting vulnerable ecosystems.



Receive the *West Coast Sailors* via First Class Mail

Name (print) _____ Book No. _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Country _____

To receive the *West Coast Sailors* via first-class mail
it's \$25 per year U.S. mail; \$50 per year international.



Send check or money order to:
West Coast Sailors
450 Harrison Street, San Francisco CA 94105



SUP PRESIDENT'S REPORT

JONES ACT WAIVER

In early March amid rumors/concerns that President Trump was considering waiving the Jones Act, seven maritime unions including SUP issued a joint letter to President Trump opposing any waivers with the Jones Act, stating Jones Act waivers are only granted in rare, exceptional circumstances, typically on grounds where U.S. Flag vessel capacity is unavailable. Between the MSP container vessels and TSP tankers congress has already addressed this, and this ensures U.S. Flag vessels crewed by American mariners are available to move critical energy supplies when needed. Domestic tanker rates remain stable under long-term charters, while international shipping markets are highly volatile. Waivers won't lower gas prices. The primary driver of fuel costs is crude oil – not domestic shipping. Study after study shows the impact of nation-wide fuel prices is negligible, and any marginal savings would be unlikely to reach consumers.

Unfortunately, on March 18th President Trump issued a 60-day limited waiver of the Jones Act for coal, crude oil, refined petroleum products, natural gas, natural gas liquids, fertilizer, anything using refined petroleum products as a primary feedstock and other energy derivatives. Shortly after, a group of nine maritime organizations issued a statement raising serious concerns over the waiver.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 18, 2026

Maritime Labor Leaders Push Back on 60-Day Jones Act Waiver

Washington, D.C. — A coalition of U.S. maritime labor organizations, including the American Maritime Officers; American Radio Association; International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots; Marine Firemen's Union; Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association; Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Sailors' Union of the Pacific; Seafarers International Union; and the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, today expressed alarm regarding the Trump Administration's decision to issue a sweeping 60-day waiver of the Jones Act in the following statement:

"America's maritime labor unions are deeply concerned about the Administration's broad Jones Act waiver, which undermines our national security, weakens military readiness, and hands critical maritime work to foreign vessel operators. Jones Act waivers are intended to meet a strict legal standard and are traditionally granted only in narrow, clearly defined national security emergencies where U.S.-flag capacity is unavailable. Maritime labor has supported narrowly tailored Jones Act waivers in the past when they were obviously justified in the national interest, but this sweeping action does not meet that standard."

"At a time of heightened global instability where American sailors are being targeted in the Persian Gulf and surrounding areas, opening U.S. waterways to foreign adversaries through an expansive Jones Act waiver further jeopardizes America's safety and security in open waters. Such action only permits more abuse of our nation's cabotage laws and sends a damaging signal about the nation's commitment to sustain a strong U.S. maritime industry and workforce."

"To be clear, this decision will not provide meaningful relief at the gas pump. It has been plainly shown that the primary driver of gasoline prices remains the global cost of crude oil, and multiple analyses demonstrate that domestic shipping accounts for less than one cent per gallon. Any marginal savings will not reach consumers but will instead reward foreign shipping interests at the expense of American workers."

"Maritime labor calls on the Administration to reverse course and work with stakeholders on real solutions that address energy costs without sacrificing American jobs, national security, or the long-term strength of the U.S. maritime industrial base."

###

NATIONAL MARITIME CENTER

Every member who serves aboard a U.S. flagged vessel is required by federal law and international treaty to hold a valid credential issued by the National Maritime Center. Without a credential, a mariner cannot stand a watch, sail as an officer, or hold a safety-critical position. There are no waivers, grace periods, or extensions when one of our ships pulls into a foreign country and their coast guard boards the ship to make sure our documentation is in full compliance. Without a valid MMC, our ability to work and earn money is gone. These government shutdowns have unfair and crippling consequences to our individual members and in turn put the Unions' ability to fill billets in jeopardy. On March 25, SUP and over 75 organizations sent a letter to Admiral Kevin E. Lundy, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard requesting several actions:

1. Designate all Vessel Traffic Service centers as performing functions essential to the safety of life and property and restore full operational staffing immediately.
2. Designate National Maritime Center's credentialing and examination operations as essential to national security, the defense industrial base, and restore full NMC staffing to process all pending applications, renewals, and examinations without further delay.
3. Designate the National Vessel Documentation Center's documentation, titling, and mortgage recording operations as essential to commerce and the integrity of the U.S. vessel registry, and restore full NVDC staffing so that vessels may lawfully enter and exit U.S. documentation without further delay.
4. Communicate directly with the Secretary of Homeland Security and, if necessary, the White House Office of Management and Budget, urging that maritime safety, credentialing, and documentation functions be treated with the same policy priority as aviation safety functions under any shutdown or funding lapse scenario.

AMERICAN PRESIDENT LINES

Non-MSP Vessels — Back in March of 2025 CMA CGM (parent company to APL) CEO Rodolphe Saade met with President Trump and announced a \$20 billion dollar investment into America's maritime infrastructure and logistics. Part of this plan was to flag in twenty U.S. flag vessels under the APL fleet. While this seemed a bit ambitious but there were grounds to be optimistic.

In April 2025, APL management contacted the SUP and MFOW and reaffirmed their commitment to employing SUP and MFOW personnel aboard their 9 MSP and 1 non-MSP ship (at the time *President Johnson*) but that any new non-MSP ships calling east coast ports/Atlantic trade route would be operated by Osprey Ship Management and that Osprey had an agreement with the SIU and AMO. Additionally, if any non-MSP ships were to come out to the West Coast/Pacific trade routes, SUP and MFOW could potentially negotiate wage rates and crew the ships, but there were no guarantees. MFOW President Anthony Poplawski and I expressed our disappointment in this and reminded APL that we had previously crewed non-MSP ships at a lower rate, with group two health insurance on ships that called East Coast ports, and that a deal could be made, but APL was not budging. In July 2025 APL flagged in the *CMA CGM Phoenix* under Osprey management with AMO and SIU personnel were dispatched to the ship.

In August 2025 after discussing options with our attorneys, SUP and MFOW filed a grievance against APL stating that the company was in violation of Sections 3(a) and 3(b) of the General Rule in the Agreement between the SIU Pacific District and APL Marine Services, Limited. And if the company would not use SIU-PD unlicensed crew aboard the *CMA CGM Phoenix*, we go to arbitration. The MM&P Union had filed a similar grievance prior to the SUP and MFOW. In response, APL decided to temporarily have SIU-PD and MM&P personnel crew the ship in late October 2025 until the arbitration cases were resolved.

On March 4, 2026 the arbitrator for APL and MM&P concluded that APL LLC and its affiliate, APL Marine Services Ltd., violated the collective bargaining agreement when the company did not crew the *CMA CGM Phoenix* with MM&P licensed deck officers.

After the news, Anthony Poplawski and I requested a meeting with APL to discuss a grievance settlement in lieu of the July 1st arbitration hearing. The parties met on March 23rd and 24th at SUP Headquarters. After the negotiations, the following tentative memorandum of understanding was reached:

- Tentative MOU applies to all non-MSP containerships regardless of size, design, or propulsion.
- The MOU shall remain in force through September 30, 2029.
- SUP & MFOW Welfare contribution rates shall be reduced by \$45 per manday.
- Replace one AB Watch with a STOS.
- No pyramiding of overtime (already in agreement).
- SUP & MFOW agree to forego Welfare increase on October 1, 2026.
- SUP & MFOW agree to forego October 1, 2027, 3% increase to wages.
- Non-MSP ships not covered under severance provisions.
- One-time lump sum payment with the right to allocate where each union sees fit; \$125,000 for SUP and \$100,000 for MFOW.

This tentative agreement is a major success and locks in non-MSP ships for our future. This language will be adopted into our next agreement. Any member working on these ships will remain in group one health insurance, the only modest concession is they will not receive the 3% increase on wages in 2027. While we are replacing an AB/W with an STOS, this is what this union needs right now. We need to create more

continued on next page



On the portside bridge wing, SUP members aboard the *USNS Red Cloud* pose for a picture. From left to right: OS Deitric Harris, AB Raul Taganas, Bosun Frank Duffin, AB John Rogers, AB Jocelyn Merino, AB Jhon Relojo, and OS Owen Purganan.

SUP President's Report

Continued from previous page

AB's from within our union. Remember that MSP ships receive a \$7.5 million dollar stipend from the government to offset wages vs foreign flag ships. Non-MSP ships do not receive that stipend. Mr. Chairman I recommend full ratification of the MOU.

Camera Systems — The Union was notified APL has installed camera systems on the *APL Oceania* and *APL Islander* and the *CMA CGM Phoenix* will be installed next. Each remaining ship will have their cameras installed during their next dry dock period. Each ship will have similar locations for the cameras with slight variations based on the construction of the vessel. Key points regarding the camera system are as follows:

- All cameras are in plain sight and have signage.
- The system does not require any maintenance or interaction from the crew.
- The footage cannot be viewed or accessed onboard.
- Only the vendor can access the footage remotely or download it on site.
- Footage overwrites after 390 days.
- In the event footage is accessed for a SASH investigation, the data will be removed by the vendor and given to APL legal department and Coast Guard for proper chain of custody.

The camera systems are part of the Safer Seas Act passed in 2022, addressing the need to reduce incidents of sexual assault and harassment aboard vessels. These cameras in no way are being used to monitor members during work or rest hours.

High Risk Waters — The 30-day Letter of Agreement (LOA) ratified at last months meeting to designate the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman as High Risk Waters has been extended another 30 days. MFOW President Anthony Poplawski and I will continue to meet with APL monthly as per LOA to review the applicable terms and determine whether continuation or modification of this LOA is warranted. As a reminder when ships are in high-risk waters under the APL agreement all members shall receive a bonus equivalent to 100% of working base wages.

PATRIOT CONTRACT SERVICES

Cape H's- On March 19th the Union was notified by Patriot Contract Services that the *Cape Hudson*, *Cape Henry*, and *Cape Horn* would be transferred to TOTE Services. The *Cape Henry* on April 15, 2026. *Cape Hudson* June 1, 2026. *Cape Horn* on August 15, 2026. Patriot stated reason for TOTE taking over these three ships was that they were awarded *Pomeroy*, *Red Cloud*, and *Watkins* under our MARAD RRF agreement. As of now, the *George Watson*, *Cornelious Charlton*, and the *William Soderman* will remain under a MARAD GA agreement.

T-AGOS Vessels- On March 31st, the Union was notified by PCS that they have been awarded the contract to operate and maintain five Transportation Auxiliary General Ocean Surveillance vessels (T-AGOS) and one Transportation Auxiliary General Missile Range Instrumentation vessel (T-AGM).

The T-AGOS vessels are as follows: *USNS Victorious*, *USNS Loyal*, *USNS Effective*, *USNS Impeccable*, and the *USNS Able*.

The T-AGM vessel is the *USNS Howard O Lorenzen*.

This is a BIG win for SUP, MFOW, and Patriot, and comes at just the right time as the six Army ships under the Watson Class are in the middle of winding down their preposition cargo at sea (going to ROS). These are some of the best wages in the indus-



SUP President Matt Henning shaking hands with former SF Board Supervisor Aaron Peskin who served as the MTD SF Port Council guest speaker detailing the shifting state of local and national politics and the impact on the working people.

try, not just for government ships. Unlike other government contracts when/if these ships are in RAV (shipyard) or ROS (reserved operating status) the supplemental wages will remain the same. Wage increase on the anniversary date will be five percent (5%) in the first year followed by four percent (4%) each of the remaining years. When all six ships are in FOS the crewing will be six (6) Bosun's, twenty (20) AB's, and twelve (12) OS'S total. There will likely be protests as is the norm for these contracts, so an exact turnover date hasn't been given yet. I will keep the membership informed of any protest and exact turnover date when notified. Mr. Chairman, I recommend full ratification covering five T-AGOS one T-AGM vessels for wages and MOU.

APPENDIX 1

Between

PATRIOT CONTRACT SERVICES AND THE SIU PACIFIC DISTRICT

RFP N3220524R4070 – T-AGOS Vessels

(Applicable to the Sailors' Union of the Pacific)

SECTION 1. EFFECTIVE START OF CONTRACT

1.1 Full Operating Status (FOS) and Repair Availability (RAV) Wage Rates

The following wages rates shall be applicable for unlicensed deck department ratings employed in FOS and RAV:

Rating	Base Wage		Overtime Hourly	Supplemental Wage		MPP
	Monthly	Daily		Monthly	Daily	
Bosun	\$10,232.29	\$341.29	\$50.24	\$5,924.48	\$197.38	\$25.00
AB	\$7,144.04	\$238.13	\$38.62	\$3,987.27	\$132.91	\$25.00
OS	\$5,385.90	\$179.53	\$27.64	\$3,116.84	\$103.89	\$25.00
GVA	\$6,400.31	\$213.34	\$31.15	\$3,703.91	\$123.46	\$25.00

The Hourly Overtime Rate shall be paid for all work performed in excess of eight (8) hours per day Monday through Sunday, and for all hours worked on holidays.

1.2 Reduced Operating Status (ROS) Wage Rates

The following wage rates shall be applicable for unlicensed deck department ratings employed in ROS:

Rating	Base Wage		Overtime Hourly	Supplemental Wage		MPP
	Monthly	Daily		Monthly	Daily	
Bosun	\$10,119.90	\$337.33	\$50.24	\$5,924.48	\$197.38	\$25.00
AB	\$7,065.60	\$235.52	\$38.62	\$3,987.27	\$132.91	\$25.00
OS	\$5,326.80	\$177.56	\$27.64	\$3,116.84	\$103.89	\$25.00
GVA	\$6,330.00	\$211.00	\$31.15	\$3,703.91	\$123.46	\$25.00

The Hourly Overtime Rate shall be paid for all work performed in excess of eight (8) hours per day Monday through Friday, and for all hours worked on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

MATSON NAVIGATION

Matson Payroll mistakenly included members supplemental wages filed in 2025 as part of employees W2 earnings. While in previous years this is how wages were reported it has been switched to the SIU-PD Welfare Plan reporting members wages for supplemental wages filed in 2025. All members should have received a corrected W2 by the end of March from Matson. For members who already filed their tax returns before receiving a corrected W2, you will need to amend your tax returns.

As a reminder, please send in all proposal to your Branch Agent or HQ in writing or by email for the upcoming Matson negotiations. The current agreement ends June 30, 2026.

ANDREW FURUSETH SCHOOL OF SEAMANSHIP

Our new Training Rep is Liz Zeiger, for all training inquiries please contact your Branch Agent and Liz.

Cell phone: (949) 257 2951

Email: Liz@marinerbenefits.org

Mail receipts to: PO BOX 2399, Mission Viejo, CA, 92690

CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF LABOR UNIONS

On March 16 I attended the California Labor Federation preprimary cope convention in Sacramento, Ca. The purpose of this event is to decide labor's endorsement for state senate, assembly, state constitutional officers, and US house of representatives. After a full day of healthy debate between affiliated unions, endorsements were made (see communications packet).

QUARTERLY FINANCE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Article XXII Section 2 of the SUP Constitution, a Quarterly Finance Committee shall be elected at today's meeting to review the finances for the first quarter of 2026 and report back to the membership in May meetings. If the Committee cannot be filled today, or a member nominated can't make it on the meeting day, I recommend that when quarterly audit of the Union finances is complete, the Committee be shipped off the deck as per past practice. The Committee will turn to Monday, May 11th.

Matt Henning

Appendix 1 – Sailors’ Union of the Pacific Effective April 1, 2026 Patriot Contract Service Wage and Fringe Benefit Rates Watson Class Vessels – Solicitation N32205-21-C-3009

FULL OPERATING STATUS (FOS)

Rating	56-Hour	56-Hour	Overtime	Supplemental	Supplemental	Supplemental	MPP
	Base Wage	Base Wage		Benefit Base	Benefit	Benefit	
	Monthly	Daily	Hourly	Monthly	Monthly	Daily	
Bosun	\$8,940.60	\$298.02	\$37.66	\$6,205.07	\$3,102.53	\$103.42	\$21.70
AB	\$7,072.50	\$235.75	\$29.02	\$4,780.13	\$2,390.06	\$80.01	\$21.70
OS	\$5,048.10	\$168.27	\$23.03	\$3,382.52	\$1,691.26	\$56.38	\$21.70

The Supplemental wage benefit shall be computed on the bases of fifteen (15) days supplemental wages for each thirty (30) days worked or pro rata thereof at each rating’s respective daily supplemental benefit rate.

REDUCED OPERATING STATUS (ROS) or REPAIR AVAILABILITY STATUS (RAV)

Rating	40-Hour	40-Hour	Overtime	Supplemental	MPP
	Base Wage	Base Wage		Benefit	
	Monthly	Daily	Hourly	Daily	
Bosun	\$7,268.10	\$242.27	\$37.66	\$12.11	\$21.62
AB	\$5,147.70	\$189.96	\$29.03	\$9.50	\$21.62
OS	\$4,363.50	\$145.45	\$23.03	\$7.27	\$21.62

During periods of ROS or RAV, Unlicensed Personnel shall earn one and one-half (1.5) days of supplemental wages for each thirty (30) days employed or pro rata thereof. Supplemental wages in ROS and RAV shall be administered directly by the Company.

Jones Act Waiver Seen as Political Fix With Limited Impact

continued from page 1

rowly defined emergencies, such as natural disasters or immediate military needs. Expanding their use to address market fluctuations, they argue, sets a troubling precedent that could normalize the erosion of cabotage protections.

Supporters of the waiver, including fuel and agricultural trade groups, have welcomed the added flexibility, citing urgent logistical challenges in moving energy and fertilizer supplies during

peak demand periods. Yet even among proponents, expectations for meaningful price relief remain muted.

Ultimately, the 60-day suspension highlights a deeper policy contradiction. While the administration has historically expressed support for domestic energy independence and American industry, the waiver temporarily opens U.S. coastal trade to foreign competition, undercutting the very framework designed to sustain it.



USNS Dahl in Bayonne, NJ drydock for scheduled maintenance. Pictured from left to right: Bosun Alex Sapien, AB's Lois Black & Noel Romero, OS Tawfiq Ahmed.

Geopolitics Upends Global Shipping as Strait of Hormuz Crisis Deepens

continued from page 1

Longer shipping routes, including detours around the Cape of Good Hope, are adding weeks to transit times, increasing fuel consumption and freight rates. “The entire logistics system is under pressure again,” said a shipping executive. “Just as the industry was stabilizing, geopolitics has thrown everything back into flux.”

Efforts to establish safe maritime corridors have so far yielded limited progress. International proposals aimed at protecting commercial vessels have been met with resistance from Tehran, while diplomatic negotiations remain fragile. European nations are exploring independent strategies to safeguard shipping, but coordination challenges persist.

Regulators, including the International Maritime Organization, have urged restraint and cooperation, warning that prolonged instability could have lasting consequences for global trade. Yet with tensions still high and no clear resolution in sight, industry leaders are bracing for continued volatility.

For shipowners, charterers, and cargo interests, the calculus has shifted dramatically. Risk assessment, once a routine aspect of maritime operations, now dominates decision-making, with geopolitical considerations outweighing traditional commercial factors. The crisis has underscored a stark reality: in an interconnected global economy, chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz remain critical vulnerabilities. When they falter, the consequences are swift and far-reaching.

Until security can be reliably restored, the outlook for the maritime sector remains uncertain. Shipping costs are expected to stay elevated,

transit times extended, and operational risks high, a combination that could reshape trade patterns long after the current crisis subsides. For now, the world’s shipping lanes remain on edge, caught in the crosscurrents of geopolitics that show little sign of easing.



Dispatcher’s Report Headquarters — January 2026

Deck	
Bosun	3
Carpenter	0
MM	3
AB	9
OS.....	4
Standby S.F.....	22
Engine/Steward	
QMED.....	0
Pumpman	0
Oiler.....	0
Wiper.....	0
Steward	0
Cook.....	0
Messman.....	0
Total Jobs Shipped-All Depts.....	41
Total B, C, & D Shipped-All Depts.	22
Total Registered “A”	21
Total Registered “B”	23
Total Registered “C”	11
Total Registered “D”	21

SUP Pensioners Join the Ranks of Retirement

No New Pensioners Reported

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

March 2026

CAPE VINCENT — Patriot called for full activation of Cape Vincent. The ship was swiftly dispatched because SUP mariners stepped up to the bat and made home runs. SUP mariners think about how much money they're going to make when dangerous waters are exposed. I couldn't be more grateful for the attitude some of our members have towards shipping. Tough as nails and ready to ship. Dmitrios Kolymparis, Bosun.

CAPEH's — We hit the end of the chapter for *Henry*, *Hudson* and *Horn*. They are all still active and mariners and still working. But in due time, we will depart these vessels.

CAPE ORLANDO — Patriot called for 10-day activation. Crew dispatched off the board and fully crewed. Deck gang brought the vessel from Mare Island to Oakland. No beef and tied up alongside ADM Callaghan. Phil Coulter, Bosun

SUP BRANCH REPORTS

HONOLULU

March 2026

SHIPPING: The following jobs were dispatched for the month: 3 AB Day Steady, 1 AB Day Relief, 1 AB Day Return, 3 Watch Steady, 1 AB Watch Return, and 1 Ordinary Steady. There were 14 Standbys Jobs dispatched for the month.

REGISTERED: 7 A-Cards, 22 B-Cards, 7 C-Cards, and 1 D-Cards.

SHIPS CHECKED: *Islander*, *Oceania*, *President Carter* (Met the ship at Pier 1. Along with the Hawaii Ports Maritime Council. We were able to resolve the Stores/Provisions issue quickly. Gang reports issues with not having enough bottled water aboard) *D.K. Inouye*, *Manulani*, *R.J. Pfeiffer*, *Mokihana*, *Lurline*, *Kaimana Hila*, *Mahimahi*, *Manoa*, *Maunawili*, *Matsonia*, and the Paint & Rigging Gang all running smooth, with few if any beefs.

Agent's Report:

Shipping has remained the same (slow). It's my opinion that permits being able to pick and choose jobs is on a pause for now. With everything happening in the world right now. This might change. But for now,

a permit is encouraged to take available work with enthusiasm. We got late word that the POTUS has issued an Executive Order for a 60 day waiver on the Jones Act. One of the B.S. talking points is it will bring savings to the consumer. A gallon of Regular was \$3.59 a week ago. It's currently \$4.69. Will keep you posted on the "Magical" savings this Jones Act waiver will not have. The National Maritime Center and local USCG REC are still closed. However, there has been a "trickle" of Med Certs that have been mailed out. But still have people waiting and there is no word on document renewals or upgrades. Corrected W-2's should have been mailed out to those affected. If you're still waiting. Let me or other Agents know and we'll get you the contact info needed to get this fixed. If you have six months before your documents expire. Please get going with the renewal process. If you need help? Come in and let's get it squared away.

Patrick Max Weisbarth,
Honolulu Branch Agent

WILMINGTON

March 2026

Shipping: Bosun 3, AB/W 7, AB/D 8, OS/STOS 1, GVA/GUDE 0, Standby: 57

Total Jobs Shipped: 76

Registrations: A 31 B 34 C 2 D 4

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

Agent's Report:

Things out here in LA keep moving. Work's steady, shipping's busy as ever. Not much to report this time around. Stuff's turning, one way or another doesn't mean it's all headed the right way. On the paperwork when you bring in anything for USCG (CG-719K), take a minute and actually look it over. Every page. Make sure it's filled out right. If you don't hear anything back in a day or two saying they got it, then something's off.

That's usually how it goes. Maritime Day's coming up faster than it seems. We had the A.M.M.V.M.C. meeting a few weeks back. I passed the Treasurer job over to Jerry Aspland.

May 22, 2026, 1100 foot of 6th Street and Harbor Blvd. That's where the service is. Be there. After that we'll head over to Raffaello Ristorante, just a short walk. Prices aren't what they used to be I'll send the invite so you know what you're walking into. Same drill as always pay your dues, keep your paperwork straight, stay current. Try to make the monthly meetings when you can.

That's it. Stay safe out there.

Fraternally Submitted,
Leo Martinez, Book #19362
Wilmington Port Agent

SEATTLE

March 2026

Shipping: 1 Boatswain (B); 1 AB/D (A); 2 Navy AB (B, D); 5 Standby AB (3A, 2B)

Registered: 4 A card for a total of 10, 3 B card for a total of 7, 1 C card for a total of 4, 1 D card for a total of 1

Agent's Report:

The NMC's new email Medical Certificate issuance is now in effect. Already there have been issues with this system. So far, I have had five members come in to show me the email from the NMC stating that the Med Cert has been issued and is ready to print. The message also gives instructions to open the attachment using your date of birth to access the document

for printing, however there is no attachment in the email. I think this may be a personal device firewall setting issue that blocks attachments. I went to the NMC site to see if I could request a reissuance of the Med Cert so I could print it out from the office computer but could find no avenue to do so in the menus provided. If you run into this, you will likely need to contact the NMC via the chat option to get it squared away. After application, it's a good idea to check your email spam box regularly just in case it ends up there.

Fraternally,
Brandon Bohannon, Seattle Port Agent

ADM CALLAGHAN — Callaghan has been a great ship and an entrance for many of us mariners starting in the industry. We are closing in on Callaghan's final days with an upcoming activation to Beaumont, TX. Norhaslan Idris, Bosun

USNS SEAY — Seay anchored in Saipan after successfully completing operations in Philippines, No beefs. Sherwin Bongayan, Bosun.

T-AGOS CLASS — Patriot has just secured a great victory with the upcoming class of spy ships. We are fortunate and in a time of need for jobs of this caliber. T-AGOS class will be the highest pay scale of any SUP military shipping environment in our history. We will see a Bosun, 3 AB's and 2 OS's. The timing couldn't be more perfect for this moment because the lion-share of the Watson class ships have gone ROS and are likely to be in reserve for the remainder of our time, unless plans change... It's time to set our sights and goals to the T-AGOS class ships, these are the vessels that will manufacture our AB's, billets to our military trained AB's, and bring great value to our members. The right thing to do is value these upcoming jobs, fill them, and don't leave any of these jobs hanging on the board when the time comes, we must fill every billet.

UTAH VOYAGER — I went and visited SUP gang on the Utah Voyager. SUP supports all unlicensed crew on Chevron vessels. The new CVX Agreement 2026 has been ratified and is live on the ship. Few minor beefs. Romulo Racoma, Bosun.

TEXAS VOYAGER — It's been pleasant to see mariners from Chevron reaching out to join SUP, looking for shelter to plant the rest of their career. SUP negotiated a solid and historic pay raise for all unlicensed departments, 4% for the first year, 3.5% for the second year, and 3% for the third year. Beef about internet rationing from last visit. Lena Von Machui, Bosun.

Sam Worth

BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT

March 2026

REMINDER TO MEMBERS WHEN TAKING GANGWAY SECURITY, COMPLETELY FILL OUT TIMESHEETS AND HAVE THE CHIEF OFFICER SIGN THEM. IF NOT, THIS WILL DELAY THE PAYMENT PROCESS

President Bush: Japan via email delegate Arthur Brosnan, there was an issue with the Coast Guard and Customs agents. We were sent to anchor for a couple of days after boarding the vessel regarding one of the crew member. Completing their investigation, they went down the gangway, and the vessel departed Japan. Mike Raun as Bosun.

President Adams: Oakland #56 Delegate Joe Erckert departed on schedule for Japan. Working the crossing the Bosun kept us working weather permitting. We had an issue with topside going aloft because we refused work due to safety concerns regarding the radar. The issue was rectified, and the job was completed safely with Scott Oliphant as Bosun.

President Johnson: Delegate Javier Rosales, all is well on board, good ship happy deck department. Gang working steadily making money with Rico Elcanir Jr. as Bosun.

APL Eagle: Delegate McKevin Dulay in and out Jebel Ali all is well despite the condition the gang is in good spirits with Ali Ghaleb as Bosun.

CMA CGM Phoenix: via email Janan Johair delegate on the turn around back to the East Coast due back in the middle of May. Marc Calario as Bosun.

WHEN SUBMITTING UPGRADE APPLICATION SEND COPIES OF DISCHARGE AND DUES MUST BE CURRENT OR YOU WILL BE DEINED. AFTER UPGRADE ALL PAPERWORK WILL BE SHREDDED.

Mahi Mahi: Oakland #62 Delegate Mark Relojo we departed on schedule for Los Angeles. From Honolulu the vessel will prepare the ship for the shipyard. The vessel is due in drydock May 2nd with Izzy Idris as Bosun.

Manoa: Oakland #62 Noel Itsumaru delegate, back on the west coast via shipyard for Los Angeles on the southern triangle. Matson refused to pay Restriction to the ship in safe harbor with no launch service.

This chief mate is a real company man with no regard for our contract; another one trying to make a name for himself. John Crockett as Bosun.

Maunawili: Oakland #62. Delegate Christopher Go, in and out on schedule good gang on the Northern triangle running smooth with Brandon Keopuhiwa as Bosun.

SFBP: Pier#9 Chris Auer delegate training on going one or two temporary deckhands getting close to getting checked off. The training continues. Steve Ross Dock Bosun.

IF YOU HAVE LESS THAN 6 MONTHS ITS TIME FOR THE RENEWAL PROCESS. DUES CAN BE PAID OVER THE PHONE BY CALLING HEADQUARTERS
Fraternally, Roy Tufono



The *Cape Orlando* was recently activated for a seven day sea trial out of Oakland, CA. From all reports, the crew did a great job, and the ship returned home safe and sound. From left to right: AB Anthony Wylie, OS Andre Price, Bosun Phil Coulter, AB Alhagie Touray (kneeling), OS Kauai Tufono, OS Beatriz Rodriguez, AB Romelito Linatoc, AB Rogelio Timoteo,