



# West Coast Sailors

Official Organ of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Thursday, June 12 2025



## Mexican Navy Tall Ship Cuauhtémoc Collides with Brooklyn Bridge

A mission of diplomacy and pride turned into a nightmare on May 17, 2025, when the *ARM Cuauhtémoc*, a Mexican Navy tall ship and symbol of national heritage, struck the Brooklyn Bridge in a tragic maritime accident. The collision claimed the lives of two young naval cadets and left over 20 crew members injured, many emotionally traumatized.

The accident occurred just minutes after the vessel departed from Manhattan's South Street Seaport, where it had docked as part of its 2025 goodwill voyage — a 22-port journey celebrating Mexican independence and showcasing naval cooperation. "One moment we were waving

goodbye, the next we saw the masts snap like matchsticks," said local photographer Martin Alvarez, who had been documenting the ship's departure. "People on board started screaming — you could feel the panic even from shore."

The 297-foot, three-masted ship had just begun to reverse from its berth when it reportedly lost propulsion. Investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) later confirmed that the ship began drifting backward uncontrollably in the East River. Its main masts, standing over 140 feet tall, collided with the lower span of the iconic Brooklyn Bridge at around 8:26 p.m. Eyewitness videos showed several cadets clinging to the rigging as the masts snapped violently upon impact. The scene was chaotic, with rigging ropes and broken timbers raining down on the deck. Many of the injured were struck by falling debris or thrown by the force of the collision. "It was like watching a nightmare in slow motion," said Nancy Liu, a tourist from San Francisco. "You think something like that could never happen with a ship like this — not in a place like New York."

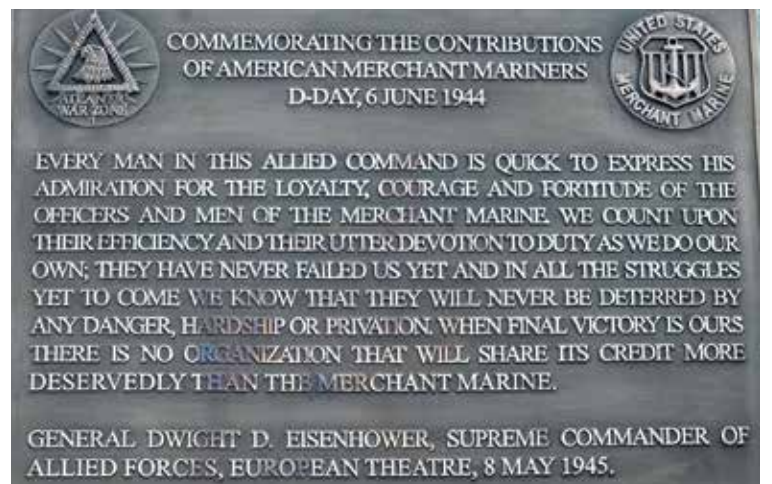
The crash claimed the lives of two cadets: América Yamilet Sánchez, 20, from Veracruz, and Adal Jair Maldonado Marcos, 23, from Oaxaca. Both were described as outstanding students of the Heroica Escuela Naval Militar and had been among the top performers selected for the

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## Supplying Victory: The Merchant Marines on D-Day

On June 6, 1944, Allied forces launched Operation Overlord, the largest amphibious invasion in history, storming the beaches of Normandy to begin the liberation of Western Europe from Nazi occupation. While the day is often remembered for the heroism of soldiers who landed on the shores under fire, a vital yet often overlooked role was played by the U.S. Merchant Marine. These civilian mariners, operating under hazardous conditions, delivered troops, vehicles, ammunition, and fuel — all while facing the same dangers as combat troops, without the recognition or benefits of military service.

The Merchant Marine was essential in transporting men and materiel across the English Channel. In the weeks leading up to D-Day, merchant vessels shuttled thousands of tons of cargo and hundreds of thousands of troops in preparation for the assault. On D-Day itself, over 250 merchant ships were part of the initial invasion force, including Liberty ships, tankers, and troop carriers. They operated in concert with naval vessels, braving German mines,



U-boats, and shore batteries to ensure the success of the landings. The Normandy invasion required precise logistics on an unprecedented scale. Merchant Mariners manned supply ships carrying everything from tanks to bandages, food to fuel. They were tasked not only with getting cargo to the beaches, but also with unloading it—sometimes under fire, often in rough seas, and always with limited protection.

One of the most perilous assignments was piloting Liberty ships and transport vessels to the "Mulberry" harbors—portable, artificial harbors constructed off the beaches to facilitate rapid

unloading. These ships and their civilian crews operated in open waters exposed to German artillery and Luftwaffe attacks. With naval escorts focusing on shore bombardment and air cover stretched thin, merchant mariners found themselves vulnerable. Despite this, they carried out their duties with determination. Many of them, with little to no combat training, manned defensive guns installed on their ships, shooting back at enemy aircraft and engaging small enemy craft. The U.S. Maritime Service had trained thousands of these civilians to serve under extreme conditions, yet they were not

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## Unions Resist Trump's Immigration Raids

Following a wave of federal immigration raids in the Los Angeles area this week, a coalition of major labor unions is vocally opposing the Trump campaign's renewed push for mass deportations and hardline immigration enforcement. The backlash highlights a growing divide between organized labor and former President Donald Trump's evolving 2025 immigration platform, which critics say echoes the most aggressive elements of his first term.

The raids, carried out by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, targeted workplaces in the San Fernando Valley and South Los Angeles, resulting in over 180 arrests. Officials said the enforcement actions focused on undocu-

mented workers with previous deportation orders or criminal convictions. But labor leaders argue that the raids created a climate of fear for all immigrant workers, documented or not.

Federal agents arrested David Huerta; the well-known head of California's largest public sector union while he was demonstrating outside of a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement raid at a worksite in Los Angeles on Friday. Huerta's arrest helped fuel the intense, days-long protests in Los Angeles over the weekend, as calls for his release mounted among unions and protesters. It also inspired smaller rallies in cities across the country, many of the latter organized by the union Huerta belongs to, the Service

Employees International Union.

"This is a direct attack on working people," said María Elena Durazo, a California state senator and longtime labor organizer. "You can't separate labor rights from immigrant rights, and we won't let these scare tactics go unanswered."

In the days following the raids, the AFL-CIO, SEIU, UNITE HERE, and the United Farm Workers (UFW) held emergency meetings and press events across Southern California. At a Thursday rally in downtown L.A., hundreds of union members, immigrant rights activists, and local officials gathered to denounce Trump's proposals and call for sanctuary protections for undocumented workers. "We built this economy," shouted

*continued on page 11*





# 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 Clay .....BK#4794  
Mike Worth .....BK#3629  
Terrence Lane .....BK#4107  
Teofilo Rojas ..... BK#3194  
Leo Moore.....BK#6492  
Duke Maringer .....BK#6518

## Political Fund

William Williamson ..... \$100  
Mahon Gandy..... \$150  
Vincent O'Halloran .....\$200  
Lisa Stelpstra ..... \$20  
Victor Ramos.....\$40  
Lee Bolden ..... \$100

## Organization/General Fund

Jose O.duran..... \$50  
Valeriy Goncharov ..... \$50  
Cody Clark.. \$50 (In Lieu Of Dues)  
William Williamson ..... \$100

### SUP Meetings 2025

HQ	Branches
July 14	July 21
August 11	August 18
September 8	September 15
October 14*	October 20
November 10	November 17
December 8	December 15
*Tuesday meeting due to holiday	

### Final Departures

**Paul Choi, Book No. 4720.** Born in China in 1930. Joined SUP in 1951. Died on March 19, 2025. (Pensioner)

**William Walker, Book No. 3636.** Born in California in 1947. Joined SUP in 1970. Died on May 25, 2025. (Pensioner)

## SUP WELFARE PLAN

### Dependent Coverage

Dependents must be added to your health plan enrollment within 30 days of acquiring the dependent by marriage, birth, or adoption. Dependents who are not added within 30 days of becoming dependents can only be added during the Plan's open enrollment period. An exception is made for dependents who lose their coverage through another plan, such as a spouse losing coverage through their employer.

Contact the Plan Office for enrollment forms to add your dependents. We will also need a copy of the marriage certificate to add your spouse and birth certificates to add children. Do not delay the enrollment for children if you do not have a birth certificate. Complete the enrollment form and attach a note that you will forward the birth certificate and social security number when you have the information.

If you need help completing forms, please contact the SUP Welfare Plan office and respond to mail, e-mail, or telephone inquiries from the SUP Welfare Plan office that are needed to complete enrollments.

Also, check to make sure you have ID cards for your Plan coverage. Most medical plans have individual ID cards for all covered Members and dependents. Many of the dental plans issue only one ID card for the family, but do have all enrolled dependents listed in their records.

### Reimbursement for Vision Care

The vision care benefit for active participants is allowed once in a 24-month period. The \$200.00 maximum includes the exam and glasses. The cost of tints is not included in the reimbursable amount. The vision benefit is for members only and does not include dependents. An itemized bill must be submitted to the Plan office within 90 days of the service. The bill must include the provider's name and address, the patient's name, date of service, and an itemization of the charges.

The vision care allowance for pensioners is included in the \$1,000.00 maximum of the Pensioners Annual Allowance for medical, dental, and vision co-payments. Glasses are an allowable expense once in a fiscal year.

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SIU-PD Pension 415-764-4987 SIU-PD Supplemental Benefits 415-764-4991  
Seafarers Medical Center 415-392-3611

## West Coast Sailors

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## Membership and Ratings Committee

The Committee met on June 5, 2025 and found the following members eligible for advancement in seniority and rating stamps in the various departments.

Name and Membership	Number	Seatime	Rating	
Dennis Solijon	Bk#7543	6 yrs.	A.B.	A
Michael Haslam	Bk#5892	6 yrs.	A.B.	A
Zulma Guity	B-19835	1 yr.	O.S.	B
Jordan Landingham	B-19836	1 yr.	A.B.	B
Jose Campollo	B-19837	1 yr.	O.S.	B
Gabriel Torres	B-19838	1 yr.	A.B.	B
Marquese Mitchell	C-3096	30 days	O.S.	C
Timothy O'Meara	C-3097	30 days	O.S.	C
Betty Nora Sirait	C-3098	30 days	A.B.	C
Dmytro Bubnov	C-3099	30 days	A.B.	C
Mhark Poquez	C-3100	30 days	O.S.	C
Tara Russo	C-3101	30 days	A.B.	C
Jose Albo	C-3102	30days	A.B.	C
Austin Killeen	C-3103	30 days	A.B.	C
Samuel Thatcher	C-3104	30 days	A.B.	C
Mehdi Youssef	C-3105	30 days	A.B.	C

### Ratings: Bosun Stamp

Matthew Dulay	Bk#2765
Ronildo Dimatulac	BK#2766

Ratings Committee: John Crocket, BK#4793; Ariel Odion, BK#2477 and Rogelio Timoteo, BK#3308.



Membership and Rating Committee Left to Right: Ariel Odion, Rogelio Timoteo, and John Crocke, BK#4793t.



Dennis Solijon, BK# 7543. Taking the Oath of Obligation at HQ meeting June 9, 2025.



# Global Trade’s Dirty Secret: Record Rise in Abandoned Ships

The maritime industry is grappling with an unprecedented crisis as vessel abandonments reach record highs. In 2024, the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) reported 312 abandoned ships, a staggering 136% increase from 132 in 2023. This surge left over 3,100 seafarers stranded without pay, basic necessities, or means to return home.

The trend shows no signs of abating. By May 2025, 158 cases of vessel abandonment had already been recorded, marking a 33% increase compared to the same period in 2024. These incidents have affected more than 1,500 seafarers, many of whom have reached out to the ITF for assistance.

Seafarers often endure harrowing conditions when abandoned. Many are left without food, water, or access to ports, sometimes for months at a time. The psychological and physical toll is immense, with crew members facing isolation, uncertainty, and deteriorating health.

One such case is that of Vihaan, a marine engineer from Tamil Nadu, India. He was stranded for nearly a year near Bangladesh due to his vessel’s detention over unpaid fees. His passport and certification were seized, leaving him unable to return home. His family faced severe financial strains, with his daughter’s education and wife’s medical treatment jeopardized.

The rise in abandonments is attributed to several factors:

- **Economic Pressures:** Smaller shipping companies, often operating on thin margins, are more prone to financial difficulties leading to abandonment.
- **Flags of Convenience:** Shipowners register vessels in countries with lenient regulations, allowing them to evade responsibilities and complicate enforcement efforts.
- **Lack of Enforcement:** Despite international conventions, enforcement remains weak. Owners often use shell companies and complex ownership structures to avoid accountability.



The ITF and other organizations are working to assist abandoned seafarers. In 2024, the ITF recovered over \$58 million in unpaid wages and helped repatriate numerous crew members. However, these efforts are often hampered by legal complexities and lack of cooperation from shipowners and flag states. The ITF has called for stronger international enforcement and accountability measures to protect seafarers’ rights. “We’re dealing with owners who vanish, often protected by substandard registries that do nothing,” said Steve Trowsdale, head of the ITF inspectorate. “It’s often impossible to even identify who owns the vessel. This growing impunity is what makes the situation so dangerous.”

The alarming increase in vessel abandonments underscores systemic issues within the maritime industry. Without concerted global action to enforce regulations and hold shipowners accountable, thousands of seafarers will continue to face abandonment, jeopardizing their well-being and the integrity of global trade.

# Panama Responds to Sanctions Evasion Allegations with Registry Reforms

Panama, home to the world’s largest ship registry, is facing mounting international scrutiny after accusations emerged that its open registry system has been exploited to help Iran evade sanctions. The Panamanian government has firmly rejected these allegations, emphasizing recent regulatory reforms and its ongoing commitment to maritime transparency and international law.

The controversy centers around claims from U.S. and European officials that Panama’s ship registry—a flag of convenience system—has enabled Iranian-linked vessels to operate with relative anonymity. Critics argue that this system allows ships associated with Iran’s sanctioned oil trade to reflag under Panama’s flag, concealing their true ownership and activities. These concerns have intensified amid geopolitical tensions and the global enforcement of sanctions related to Iran’s nuclear program. According to recent intelligence reports, several tankers allegedly connected to Iranian entities have been found sailing under Panamanian flags, raising questions about how effectively the registry is vetting applicants. The dispute intensified after United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI) recent analysis revealed that 17% of vessels suspected of transporting Iranian oil—94 out of 542 tracked vessels—currently sail under Panama’s flag. This data has led to Wallace calling for immediate sanctions against Panama, claiming the country has “facilitated billions of dollars of Iran’s oil sales.”

In response, Panama’s Maritime Authority (AMP) issued a strong statement defending the integrity of its ship registry, the largest in the world with more than 8,000 vessels. The AMP argued that the registry follows strict due diligence

procedures and routinely cooperates with international bodies to identify, and de-list vessels connected to illicit activities. “Panama categorically denies any systematic or deliberate facilitation of sanctions evasion,” the AMP said. “We have robust mechanisms in place to detect suspicious activity and take action when credible evidence is presented.” In fact, Panama claims to have de-flagged over 200 vessels in the past five years linked to violations of international sanctions, including those targeting Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela.

Open registries like Panama’s allow foreign-owned vessels to register under the country’s flag, often for lower fees and lighter regulatory burdens. While this system is legal under international maritime law, it has long been criticized for enabling opacity in vessel ownership, particularly when ships change flags multiple times in a short period—a practice known as “flag hopping.” Maritime security experts say such loopholes make it easier for sanctioned countries to disguise the true operators of vessels involved in illegal oil shipments or arms transfers. “The flag of convenience model, while economically advantageous, can create blind spots in global sanctions enforcement,” said Laura Rozen, an analyst with the International Maritime Compliance Forum. “Panama has made improvements, but enforcement depends on both political will and technological capabilities.”

Panama has pointed to several recent reforms aimed at enhancing oversight. These include the implementation of stricter Know Your Client (KYC) protocols, integration with international sanctions databases, and the use of digital vessel tracking systems to monitor ship movements in real-time. In 2023, Panama

signed new cooperation agreements with the United States Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) and the European Maritime Safety Agency to exchange information on flagged vessels suspected of illicit activity. “These partnerships show that we are not turning a blind eye,” said AMP Administrator Noriel Araúz. “We are committed to aligning Panama’s registry with global efforts to combat sanctions evasion and maritime crime.”

Still, Panama finds itself caught in a complex web of geopolitical and economic pressures. The country’s shipping registry is a major source of national revenue and employment, and a hard crackdown on registrations could impact its economy. Moreover, critics note that international enforcement efforts often shift the burden onto flag states without addressing broader systemic issues, such as the role of ship management companies, insurers, and global trade intermediaries in facilitating illicit maritime operations. “The entire

maritime supply chain has vulnerabilities, and focusing solely on registries may overlook other enablers of sanctions evasion,” said maritime law expert Dr. Carlos Espinoza from the University of Panama.

As the global spotlight intensifies, Panama’s ability to maintain the credibility of its ship registry will be crucial—not just for its economy, but for its standing in the international community. While the AMP insists it is doing its part, international regulators are calling for greater transparency and more consistent action. “The system will only be as strong as its weakest link,” warned a senior official from the European Commission. “Panama must demonstrate that its reforms are more than just cosmetic.” In a maritime world increasingly shaped by geopolitical rivalries and sanctions regimes, Panama’s actions in the coming months will be closely watched by allies and critics alike. Whether it can strike a balance between economic interest and international responsibility remains to be seen.

## Timely Reminder 3rd Quarter 2025 Dues are Due and Payable Now!

SUP Constitution ARTICLE VI DUES AND INITIATION FEE

Section 1. The initiation fee shall be Sixteen Hundred Dollars (\$1600.00) payable in installments with the sum of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) being due and owing upon the member’s admission into the Union and the balance of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) per month for each month or part thereof in SUP-contracted vessels. The initial installment of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) shall accompany the application of membership and the dues shall be One Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$150.00) per quarter, payable in advance.

On a ship not calling ports near a SUP Hall? Not a problem, you can call Union Headquarters at (415) 777-3400 and pay dues over the phone via credit card.



# USS Harry S. Truman Strike Group Returns Home After Intense 8-Month Deployment

After an arduous eight-month deployment spanning multiple theaters of operation, the USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group (HSTCSG) returned to its homeport in Norfolk, Virginia, on June 1, 2025. The deployment, which began in September 2024, encompassed extensive combat operations, multinational exercises, and significant challenges that tested the resilience and professionalism of the sailors and aviators aboard. The HSTCSG, comprising the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), guided-missile cruiser USS Gettysburg (CG 64), and destroyers USS Stout (DDG 55) and USS Jason Dunham (DDG 109), operated across the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet areas of responsibility. Carrier Air Wing 1, embarked aboard Truman, included nine squadrons that conducted a range of missions from airstrikes to maritime security operations.

In the Red Sea, the strike group played a pivotal role in Operation Rough Rider, targeting Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen. Over a span of 50 days, Truman launched more than 1.1 million pounds of ordnance, including 670 precision strikes aimed at degrading Houthi capabilities and ensuring the safety of commercial shipping lanes. A highlight of the deployment was the record-setting airstrike on February 1, when approximately 16 F/A-18 Super Hornet fighter jets delivered 125,000 pounds of munitions against ISIS-Somalia operatives. This operation, described as the largest airstrike ever launched from an aircraft carrier, targeted terrorist cave complexes, resulting in the elimination of over a dozen high-value targets.

Beyond combat operations, the HSTCSG engaged in NATO's Neptune

Strike 24-2 exercise, collaborating with naval forces from Portugal, Norway, and Italy. Port visits to countries including Norway, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Spain, France, Croatia, and Greece underscored the U.S. Navy's commitment to strengthening alliances and promoting regional stability.

The deployment was not without its challenges. The strike group experienced several incidents, including the loss of three F/A-18 Super Hornet aircraft. One jet was inadvertently downed by the USS Gettysburg in a friendly fire incident over the Red Sea. Another fell into the sea during towing operations, and a third went overboard after an arresting cable failure during landing. In February, the USS Harry S. Truman collided with a commercial vessel near Port Said, Egypt, sustaining visible damage to its starboard side. The incident led to the replacement of the ship's commanding officer. Despite these setbacks, the crew demonstrated exceptional resilience, maintaining operational readiness and mission focus throughout the deployment.

As the Truman approached Naval Station Norfolk, thousands of family members and friends gathered to welcome their loved ones home. Sailors in dress whites manned the rails, while banners and signs waved from the pier. Among the crowd was Jordan Wallace, who greeted her husband with their 3½-month-old daughter, Maren, marking a poignant reunion after months apart. Rear Adm. Sean Bailey, commander of the HSTCSG, addressed the media, stating, "We didn't just deploy. We delivered. Our sailors faced adversity head-on and executed their missions with unparalleled dedi-



cation and professionalism." Capt. Leslie Mintz, commander of Carrier Air Wing 1, echoed these sentiments, highlighting the aviators' proficiency in conducting complex air operations and the support teams' efforts in maintaining aircraft readiness under demanding conditions.

With the completion of this deployment, the USS Harry S. Truman is slated to undergo an extended overhaul and refueling process, ensuring its continued service in the fleet for years to come. The experiences and lessons learned during

this deployment will undoubtedly inform future operations and training, reinforcing the Navy's commitment to readiness and global maritime security. As the sailors reunite with their families and reflect on their accomplishments, the return of the HSTCSG stands as a testament to the courage, skill, and perseverance of the men and women who serve aboard. Their contributions have not only advanced U.S. strategic objectives but have also reinforced the nation's commitment to its allies and partners around the world.

## Earth's Longest Mountain Range Beneath the Sea

Hidden beneath the world's oceans lies a vast and mysterious geological formation that stretches over 40,000 miles around the globe: the Mid-Oceanic Ridge. Often referred to as the planet's *longest mountain range*, this underwater ridge system plays a vital role in shaping Earth's surface and offers key insights into plate tectonics, volcanic activity, and the dynamic processes driving the evolution of the planet.

The Mid-Oceanic Ridge is a continuous chain of underwater mountains that winds its way through the major ocean basins, primarily the Atlantic, but also the Indian, Southern, and Pacific Oceans. Formed by tectonic activity, it marks the boundary between diverging plates of the Earth's crust. As tectonic plates slowly pull apart, magma rises from the mantle to fill the gap, creating new oceanic crust and forming the ridge itself. At its core, the Mid-Oceanic Ridge is a constructive plate boundary, where new lithosphere is born. Unlike mountain ranges such as the Himalayas or the Rockies, which form through the collision and uplift of crustal plates, mid-ocean ridges are built from volcanic processes below the ocean floor.

One of the most well-known sections of the Mid-Oceanic Ridge is the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, which runs from the Arctic Ocean in the north to the Southern Ocean near the tip of Africa. This segment is so prominent that it even breaks the ocean's surface in some places, most notably in Iceland. There, the spreading ridge is exposed to land, providing a rare opportunity to study its features directly. The Mid-Atlantic Ridge separates the Eurasian Plate from the North American Plate in the north, and the African Plate from the South American Plate in the south. The seafloor spreading at this boundary results in the gradual widening of the Atlantic Ocean, at a rate of roughly 2.5 centimeters per year.

Beneath the ocean's surface, the

Mid-Oceanic Ridge is not a simple, uniform mountain chain. Instead, it is composed of a central rift valley flanked by high ridges, volcanic peaks, and rugged terrain. One of the most fascinating features found along the ridge system are hydrothermal vent cracks in the seafloor where geothermally heated water escapes. These vents create unique ecosystems that thrive in extreme conditions. Entire biological communities, including tube worms, clams, and microorganisms, survive without sunlight by relying on chemosynthesis, a process in which bacteria convert chemicals like hydrogen sulfide into energy. These ecosystems have revolutionized our understanding of life on Earth and raised exciting possibilities about life on other planets and moons.

The Mid-Oceanic Ridge is fundamental to the theory of plate tectonics, a unifying concept in geology. The discovery of symmetrical magnetic stripes on either side of the ridge in the 1960s provided solid evidence for seafloor spreading and continental drift. These magnetic patterns are created as molten rock cools and solidifies, preserving the Earth's magnetic orientation at the time. In addition, the Mid-Oceanic Ridge plays a major role in carbon cycling and global heat distribution. Volcanic activity along the ridge releases gases, including carbon dioxide, into the ocean and atmosphere, while hydrothermal vents influence ocean chemistry and temperature.

Though hidden beneath miles of ocean water, the Mid-Oceanic Ridge is one of the planet's most significant geological features. It is a place where new Earth is constantly formed, where tectonic plates are set in motion, and where life finds a way in the most extreme environments. As scientific exploration of the oceans continues, the Mid-Oceanic Ridge remains a frontier of discovery, shedding light on Earth's deep past and the powerful forces that continue to shape its future.



Station Boat San Francisco crew docked at Pier 9. Cook Sandra Brown, Operators Stoy Robinson, Jordan Langingham, and Nicholas Marinovich.



# California Passes Groundbreaking Labor Bill

In a major move to strengthen worker rights, the California State Assembly passed Assembly Bill 288, known as the *California Right to Organize Act*, which seeks to fill enforcement gaps left by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The bill, introduced by Assemblymember Liz Ortega, empowers the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) to step in when federal labor protections stall, marking a historic shift in how private-sector union cases may be handled in the state. AB 288 passed the Assembly in May and is now moving through the Senate, where it is expected to face rigorous debate over legal boundaries and state-federal jurisdiction. The bill’s backers argue that California must act decisively to protect workers amid what they see as prolonged federal dysfunction.

At the heart of AB 288 is a plan to expand PERB’s authority to cover certain private-sector labor disputes typically under the purview of the NLRB. The bill outlines specific scenarios where PERB would have jurisdiction, including:

- If the NLRB lacks a quorum or is unfunded,
- If a union election or unfair labor practice (ULP) case has been pending for over six months,
- If an employer refuses to bargain in good faith for a first contract for more than six months,

Or if an employee retaliation claim remains unresolved after six months.

In these cases, workers could petition PERB directly to resolve disputes, hold hearings, and enforce decisions. PERB would be authorized to issue remedies,

certify bargaining units, and even mandate binding mediation in stalled contract negotiations. This dramatic expansion would effectively allow California to become a backstop for labor rights enforcement, at least within the state, whenever the federal process fails to act within a reasonable time.

The legislation comes in response to growing frustration with the pace and effectiveness of the NLRB. Labor advocates cite repeated funding shortfalls, political stalemates, and prolonged case backlogs as evidence that federal protections are insufficient for today’s workforce. “The right to organize is meaningless if justice takes years,” said Assemblymember Ortega during floor debate. “California must be ready to stand in when Washington can’t — or won’t — act.” Labor groups such as the California Federation of Labor Unions, have backed the bill, arguing that it is necessary to preserve fundamental worker protections in an era of increasing union activity and employer resistance. “Today Assemblymembers did the right thing and stood with working Californians who want to unionize against union-busting billionaires,” said Lorena Gonzalez, President of the California Labor Federation of Labor Unions. “This isn’t a Democratic issue or a Republican issue; this is a working-class issue. I am pleased to see lawmakers on both sides of the aisle standing up for what’s right. We will keep fighting for AB 288 and Californian’s Right to Organize until it is enforced law.”

To support this expansion, the bill would establish a new PERB Enforce-

ment Fund. This fund would be partially financed by civil penalties levied against violators, helping to absorb the costs of what is expected to be a significant increase in caseload. The Legislative Analyst’s Office estimates that the bill could cost \$26 to \$44 million annually, with PERB possibly fielding more than 3,000 new cases. Courts could also see added costs of \$100,000 to \$150,000 per year for case review, though supporters argue the investment is justified.

Not everyone is celebrating. The California Chamber of Commerce and several employer coalitions oppose AB 288, warning that the bill may violate federal preemption under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). “This is a clear overreach into territory that Congress has reserved for federal oversight,” said Denise Davis, a spokesperson for the Chamber. “The courts have repeatedly held that only the NLRB can enforce private-sector

labor rights under the NLRA.” Supporters of the bill counter that the state’s actions are narrowly tailored to fill enforcement gaps, not to rewrite federal labor law. By creating a pathway only when the NLRB is demonstrably unable to act, they argue the law stays within constitutional limits.

Whether AB 288 withstands judicial scrutiny or not, it signals a new phase in California’s approach to labor law. With union drives surging across sectors from tech to logistics, and frustrations with federal inaction rising, the bill represents a bold experiment in state-level worker protection. If it becomes law, California would be the first state to directly adjudicate private-sector union issues when federal delays persist, setting a precedent that could ripple across other progressive states. As the bill heads to the Senate for consideration, both sides are gearing up for a battle that may redefine the boundaries of state power in the labor arena.



## Wake-Up Call: Norwegian Home Nearly Hit by 135-Meter Cargo Ship

On May 22, 2025, the 135-meter container ship *NCL Salten* ran aground in Byneset, near Trondheim, Norway, narrowly missing a residential home by just five meters. The vessel, en route to Orkanger, veered off course around 5:30 a.m., startling local resident Johan Helberg, “We slept just seven meters from where the bow is and didn’t hear a thing... if it had been on a slightly different course, it would have hit the house.”

The vessel was traveling at approximately 16 knots when the incident occurred. All 16 crew members aboard the Cyprus-registered ship escaped injury. Investigations revealed that the ship’s second officer, a Ukrainian national, had fallen asleep while alone on the bridge, leading to the grounding. The 2nd Mate has been charged with negligent navigation.

The *NCL Salten*, built in 2002 and sailing under the Cypriot flag, is owned

by Lithuanian company Baltnautic and chartered by North Sea Container Line (NCL). This incident marks the third grounding for the vessel in Norway, with previous incidents occurring in Hadsel (2023) and Ålesund (2024).

Efforts to refloat the ship involved unloading containers and utilizing tugboats. By May 27, the vessel was successfully refloated and towed to the nearby harbor of Orkanger. The Norwegian Coastal Administration is conducting geotechnical surveys to assess any environmental impact, though initial reports indicate no significant damage.

This incident has raised concerns about maritime safety protocols, particularly regarding crew fatigue and bridge management/manning. Authorities are continuing their investigation to determine any further measures needed to prevent similar occurrences in the future.



RJ Pfeiffer in Honolulu.  
Left to Right: Reid Barlow (Bosun), Peter Leo , Noel Macundo, Jill Holleman (delegate), James Ericson, Gerald Marshall.



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# Morning Midas Ablaze Off Alaska Coast

On June 3, the 600-foot pure car and truck carrier *Morning Midas* caught fire approximately 300 miles south of Adak, Alaska, sparking an intense and prolonged maritime emergency. The vessel, en route from Yantai, China to Lázaro Cárdenas, Mexico, was carrying around 3,000 vehicles — including about 65–70 fully electric cars and 680–800 hybrids, when smoke appeared on a deck loaded with electric vehicles

Smoke was first detected around 3:15 p.m. local time, triggering an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast from the U.S. Coast Guard’s Seventeenth District. Coast Guard assets; including a cutter, C130J aircraft, and an MH60T Jayhawk were mobilized alongside three “good Samaritan” vessels in the area. The 22 crew members safely abandoned ship via lifeboats and were rescued by the container vessel *Cosco Hellas*. Miraculously, no injuries were reported. The onboard CO<sub>2</sub> fire suppression system was activated but apparently exhausted and given the presence of lithiumion battery fires, extinguishing efforts proved extremely challenging.

Subsequent Coast Guard overflights revealed the fire had spread across multiple decks. Smoke and flames were visible from the stern, though the hull remained largely afloat and stable. No signs of immediate pollution were detected, and structural integrity appeared maintained for the moment. By June 8, smoke still billowed from the vessel’s deck, and weather conditions around 45 knots of wind and 6-foot seas complicated containment efforts as the ship drifted near the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. On June 9, the salvage tug *Gretchen Dunlap*, contracted by Zodiac Maritime and operated by Resolve Marine, arrived on-site. Salvage crews began a comprehensive onboard assessment, with two additional firefighting/towing vessels expected in the following 1–2 weeks.

According to AP News, the team was expected to reach the vessel by the following Monday and begin both firefighting and tow preparations. Zodiac Maritime continues satellite monitoring and is coordinating closely with the Coast Guard and salvage experts. The burning vessel carries approximately 350 metric tons of gasoline



and 1,530 metric tons of very low sulfur fuel oil, heightening environmental risk. Yet to date, no pollution has been detected, thanks to stabilizing weather and drift patterns. Industry experts and insurers, including Allianz, have emphasized the growing fire dangers posed by lithium-ion batteries aboard car carriers—a risk highlighted by the 2022 *Felicity Ace* disaster, which sank after a lengthy fire.

The *Morning Midas* fire remains a

complex and evolving maritime incident. While the crew escaped unharmed and immediate environmental damage appears limited, the presence of thousands of vehicles—many with volatile lithium-ion batteries—continues to complicate firefighting efforts. The salvage operation unfolding in one of the world’s most challenging marine environments will test industry resilience and environmental safeguards alike.

## ICS Maritime Barometer Report: Industry Concerns Over Regulation, Workforce, and Decarbonization

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) has released its Maritime Barometer Report 2024–2025, revealing a shipping industry increasingly concerned about geopolitical risks, mounting regulatory burdens, and the challenges of workforce transition and decarbonization. The report, compiled from responses across a wide range of shipping companies, offers critical insights into the sentiment of global maritime stakeholders as the industry navigates a transformative period. Launched this week in London, the Maritime Barometer surveys decision-makers across the commercial shipping world to assess industry confidence, strategic priorities, and emerging challenges. This year’s edition reflects the views of over 130

shipping companies representing more than 20,000 vessels globally, making it one of the most comprehensive outlooks of its kind.

According to the report, one of the leading concerns among shipowners and operators is regulatory uncertainty, particularly surrounding climate and environmental rules. More than 75% of respondents cited “regulatory fragmentation and inconsistency” as a top challenge. Industry leaders expressed frustration at what they see as conflicting frameworks between international, regional, and national authorities. “The patchwork of regulations emerging around decarbonization, emissions reporting, and fuel standards is making it harder for

shipping companies to chart a long-term investment strategy,” said ICS Secretary General Guy Platten. “Our members want to comply and lead the transition, but they need clarity and consistency.” Of particular concern is the lack of global alignment on carbon pricing and market-based measures. The European Union’s Emissions Trading System (ETS), which applies to shipping from 2024, is seen as a model that could complicate global compliance unless harmonized with International Maritime Organization (IMO) frameworks.

Decarbonization remains a defining theme in the report. While 87% of companies say they are actively working toward the IMO’s 2050 net-zero emissions goal, many point to a lack of alternative fuels infrastructure, limited availability of green fuels, and uncertain return on investment as significant hurdles. Only 17% of shipping companies surveyed said they felt “well-prepared” to meet the 2030 interim decarbonization targets. Most said the development of scalable fuel solutions, such as green methanol, ammonia, or hydrogen remains years away from commercial viability on a wide scale. “Shipowners are ready to invest, but they need the supply chains and port infrastructure to match,” said Platten. “It’s not just about the ships. It’s about the global ecosystem.”

Another focal point in the report is the growing concern over maritime labor. Over 65% of respondents said they were either currently experiencing crew shortages or expected to in the next five years. Shortages are especially acute in the officer ranks, and the trend is exacerbated by an aging workforce and evolving skill requirements. The report calls for increased investment in seafarer training and digital competency, particularly as vessels incorporate more automation, AI systems, and energy-efficient technologies. The ICS is urging governments, maritime academies, and employers to collaborate on a global workforce strategy. “There is no green transition without skilled seafarers,” Platten

emphasized. “Our future depends not only on new fuels and vessels, but also on people who can operate and maintain them safely.”

With rising tensions in key maritime chokepoints such as the Red Sea, South China Sea, and the Black Sea, the Barometer reveals heightened industry concern over geopolitical instability. Nearly 60% of companies identified conflict-related disruptions as a high or very high risk to their operations. Respondents also flagged cybersecurity and supply chain fragility as growing threats, especially in light of recent ransomware attacks targeting port systems and container tracking networks.

Despite the many challenges outlined in the Barometer, ICS says the report shows a resilient and adaptive industry. More than half of respondents described their outlook for the next five years as “cautiously optimistic,” citing ongoing investment in newbuilds, digitalization, and sustainability. The ICS is calling for enhanced global collaboration to reduce friction and accelerate progress across all fronts. “Shipping is the engine of global trade,” Platten concluded. “To steer it toward a sustainable and secure future, we need unity in policy, clarity in regulation, and commitment to seafarers.”

The Maritime Barometer is published annually by the International Chamber of Shipping, the principal international trade association for merchant shipowners and operators. Representing over 80% of the world’s merchant fleet, the ICS advocates for sound regulatory frameworks and promotes sustainable growth in the maritime sector.

**Sudoku is fun to play, and the rules are simple. Fill in the blanks so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 grids contain one instance of each of the numbers 1 through 9.**

						6		
	2		5					8
							2	
1	9	7				4	5	
8				1			6	
	4							
	7			5	2	9	8	
4		9			6			
	5	2			7			6





# Tariff Pause Fuels Import Surge at U.S. Ports as Retailers Rush to Stock Up

Import cargo volumes at major U.S. container ports are poised to surge in the coming months as retailers race to bring in goods from China, capitalizing on a temporary easing of tariffs. The volume bump, expected to peak between June and August, reflects the rapid response by businesses to recent trade policy shifts and underscores the continued importance of China–U.S. trade even amid ongoing geopolitical tension. According to the National Retail Federation (NRF) and Hackett Associates’ latest Global Port Tracker report, inbound container volumes are projected to increase by more than 15% year-over-year across major gateways including Los Angeles, Long Beach, Savannah, and New York/New Jersey. Analysts attribute the spike directly to retailers accelerating shipments to beat the clock before tariffs return to their previous levels.

The tariff reductions announced earlier this spring as part of a temporary economic diplomacy measure are expected to remain in place through the third quarter of 2025. The affected goods include a

wide swath of consumer products such as electronics, textiles, furniture, and toys—items heavily sourced from Chinese manufacturers and critical to back-to-school and holiday season inventories. “Retailers are taking advantage of this window to restock shelves and warehouses,” said Jonathan Gold, Vice President of Supply Chain and Customs Policy at NRF. “The temporary tariff relief gives businesses a cost advantage they simply can’t ignore, especially as they prepare for seasonal spikes in demand.”

The surge is already creating ripple effects across port infrastructure. West Coast ports, especially the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach, are reporting congestion at container terminals as inbound vessels increase. Shippers are being urged to plan for extended dwell times and potential truck and rail delays, particularly as volumes build into July. “There’s a logistical challenge in absorbing this sudden upswing,” said Ben Hackett, founder of Hackett Associates. “We’re seeing berth availability tighten, chassis shortages re-emerge, and intermodal

bottlenecks appear, all hallmarks of the kind of surge that hasn’t been seen since the early pandemic recovery phase.” East Coast and Gulf Coast ports, while less directly impacted by transpacific trade routes, are also bracing for volume increases as some carriers reroute cargo to balance load and reduce delays.

The temporary tariff reduction is a result of ongoing negotiations between U.S. and Chinese trade officials aimed at stabilizing economic relations heading into a politically sensitive election year. However, uncertainty looms over what comes next. “Retailers are understandably nervous about the fall,” said Emily Benson, a trade policy expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “This could be a one-off reprieve. If tariffs snap back in the fourth quarter, businesses will have to reprice goods or absorb costs, neither is a good option.” Some importers are already exploring hedging strategies, including increasing domestic inventory and diversifying sourcing from countries like Vietnam, Mexico, and India. However, China’s manufacturing scale and

efficiency remain difficult to replicate in the short term.

The import surge offers a temporary boost to port economies, warehouse operators, and logistics providers, many of whom experienced slower volumes over the past year due to global inflation and high inventory levels. Thousands of longshore and transportation jobs are directly tied to container throughput at U.S. ports. However, labor groups are watching the situation closely. “Increased volume is good news for our members in the short term, but if it’s based on a temporary trade shift, we need to be ready for a potential cliff in the fall,” said a spokesperson for the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU).

For now, the message is clear: get the goods while you can. The convergence of summer demand, holiday stockpiling, and short-term tariff relief has created a rare alignment that importers are eager to exploit. Retailers and logistics professionals are racing against time to secure capacity, avoid delays, and maximize margins in a volatile trade environment.

# MSC-Led Deal to Acquire Two Strategic Panama Canal Ports Raises Concerns

A joint venture led by Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) is set to purchase two key ports flanking the Panama Canal, part of a sweeping \$22.8 billion acquisition of 43 global terminals from CK Hutchison. While this marks a major strategic expansion for MSC, Panama Canal officials and international observers are voicing concerns over possible threats to the waterway’s MSC, operating through its Terminal Investment Limited (TiL)—alongside partners BlackRock and Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP)—agreed to acquire an 80% stake in Hutchison’s terminal portfolio, which spans 23 countries. Crucially, the deal includes the two Panama ports at the Canal’s Atlantic (Cristóbal) and

Pacific (Balboa) entrances. BlackRock/GIP would hold a 51% majority in these Panama terminals, with MSC holding the remaining 49%.

Panama Canal Authority administrator Ricaurte Vásquez has warned that consolidating port operations under a major shipping company could undermine the Canal’s “principle of neutrality”—a key component of its international standing and competitiveness. Vásquez cautioned: “There is a potential risk of capacity concentration... at the expense of Panama’s competitiveness... inconsistent with neutrality.” He also suggested Panama could counterbalance the deal by resuming its long-discussed plan to build a new terminal at Corozal on the canal’s Pacific side.

The transaction occurs amid U.S.–China geopolitical friction. Former President Trump publicly welcomed the sale as a means to curb Chinese influence near the Canal, even calling it a “reclaiming” of the waterway. Meanwhile, China has criticized the deal, signaling strong antitrust scrutiny through its State Administration for Market Regulation. Regulatory bodies across multiple jurisdictions—including Panama and major port nations like The Netherlands—have opened reviews into the mega-deal. Compliance commitments are already in place, and the consortium has indicated willingness to divest in specific locations to satisfy antitrust demands.

If finalized, MSC would become the world’s largest container terminal operator, capturing around 8.3% of global capacity, surpassing major players like PSA International. This vertical integration—from ship-owning to terminal control—may offer MSC improved operational synergies and better vessel scheduling flexibility. However, it has also triggered

concerns from rival shipping lines, which worry MSC could use terminal control to limit their access during congestion or to gather competitive data. Supporters say the deal brings scale, efficiency, and modernization of terminal operations. Critics counter that the combination of shipping and port power risks distorting market dynamics and dampening independent competition.

The Panama portion of the sale may close much later than other assets—possibly in 9–12 months—due to geopolitical reviews and local opposition. Elsewhere in MSC’s purchase, the rest of the terminal portfolio could finalize within the next 3–6 months. In Panama, the Canal Authority appears set to revisit its terminal development plans, including the long-stalled Corozal project, to reclaim operational leverage.

The bottom line is this deal massively expands MSC’s global terminal footprint but raises critical concerns over the neutrality and equitable access at a key global chokepoint.



AB John Chiovarou and OS Isaac Samoa preparing cargo for lashing at sea on the *USNS Piililaa*.





# Investing in Youth, Means Investing in America

As policymakers consider slashing funding for the **Job Corps program**, a lifeline for underserved young Americans hangs in the balance. At a time when our nation faces rising youth unemployment, a widening skills gap, and persistent economic inequality, cutting Job Corps is not just shortsighted, it’s damaging to the future of our workforce and economy. Founded in 1964 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty, Job Corps has served over two million young people, providing free education and vocational training to those aged 16 to 24. For many, it’s the only path to a GED, a trade, and eventually a stable job. The program helps students gain hands-on experience in high-demand fields like health care, information technology, construction, advanced manufacturing, and transportation.

Eliminating or reducing this program would pull the rug out from under tens of thousands of vulnerable youths every year. Most Job Corps participants come from low-income households, often from communities facing systemic barriers to education and employment. Many are also former foster children, high school drop-outs, or young people facing homelessness. To them, Job Corps offers more than a second chance, it offers their only chance.

**Cutting Job Corps hurts working families and the economy.** The U.S. is already grappling with a labor shortage in key industries. The construction, trucking, and skilled trades sectors all report difficulties filling positions. Programs like Job Corps help close this gap by preparing the next generation of skilled workers. Reducing investment now only deepens

the crisis and forces employers to look elsewhere. Moreover, Job Corps graduates don’t just get jobs, they build futures. A 2021 Department of Labor report showed that Job Corps alumni saw significant increases in income, education levels, and job placement rates. Many go on to earn certifications that help them move up in their careers, breaking cycles of poverty that have lasted generations.

It’s also important to note that **Job Corps is cost-effective.** While some critics point to operational costs, they often ignore the broader benefits. Every dollar spent on Job Corps pays dividends in reduced dependence on social services, increased tax revenue from gainfully employed graduates, and reduced crime rates in affected communities. Studies estimate that for every \$1 invested, society gains up to \$2 in return.

Perhaps most importantly, cutting Job Corps sends the wrong message to America’s youth. It tells them that their potential doesn’t matter unless they can already afford college or training. It abandons those who’ve been failed by underfunded schools and fractured family systems. It says that the American Dream is only available to those who already have a head start. Instead of cutting Job Corps, we should be **expanding and modernizing it.** We should update curricula, partner with industries to align training with workforce needs, and increase outreach so more eligible young people can benefit. America cannot afford to turn its back on the next generation. Keeping Job Corps strong is not just an investment in individuals, it’s an investment in the country’s future.

# Food for Peace Transferred to USDA

June 7, 2025

The Honorable Andy Harris  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Agriculture  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Agriculture  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Harris and Ranking Member Bishop:

We would like to express our utmost gratitude for your inclusion of the Food for Peace transfer to USDA provision in the FY26 agriculture spending bill. The undersigned organizations represent U.S. agriculture, maritime shipping, and labor union organizations, and are one of the broadest coalitions of American stakeholders for international food assistance programs. In particular, we are all long-time participants in and strong supporters of the P.L.480 Food for Peace program. Given the current opportunity to restructure the program, we believe that the best home for Food for Peace is with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

At its core, the Food for Peace program is an America First trade policy. It supports substantial purchases from American farmers and millers that are shipped overseas in U.S. flagged vessels, creating value across the agricultural supply chain and strengthening our U.S. Merchant Marine. Moreover, sending American food to countries around the world builds consumer preferences for the products we produce best. This builds long-term commercial trade opportunities, turning humanitarian donations into some of our strongest commercial agricultural export markets. Food for Peace similarly offers critical support for the existing U.S. flagged vessel fleet and American union workers that move cargo, load, and crew the ships that transport our commodities across the globe.

For years, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has ignored the explicit concerns of American farmers, mariners, longshoremen, and other American constituencies who have sought an efficient and effective delivery of food assistance that puts American interests first. USAID has diverted Food for Peace away from simply delivering American food on American ships to starving people and has operated competing missions that are detrimental to American stakeholders. Under USAID management, only about 30 percent of the Food for Peace program budget went toward American food purchases and less than 8 percent of the budget is used for shipping U.S. commodities on U.S. ships. Entrenched philosophies have repeatedly attempted to cut out American grown food and American ships entirely from our international food assistance programs. Even with the much-needed changes to USAID under the Department of State, we firmly believe the only successful pathway to an America First Food for Peace program is under the management of USDA.

The USDA is perfectly positioned to take on this lifesaving program in the interest of American citizens. USDA is purpose-built to serve the farmers that grow the food that feeds our country and the world, including through the Food for Peace program. No agency better understands America’s essential role in global food production, with a critical contingency of Foreign Agricultural Service officers around the world. USDA already conducts the food procurement process for Food for Peace and has historically managed the entire program under Title I of P.L. 480, in addition to fully operating its two key food assistance programs: Food for Progress and McGovern-Dole Food for Education. USDA also has a positive track record of putting its cargoes on U.S. ships instead of our foreign-flag competitors. It is time to bring America’s international food assistance programs As mentioned, the Food for Peace program is truly America First. With U.S.-grown food, American flagged vessels, crewed by Americans, the donated commodities proudly display “From the American People” on each of its packages. Food for Peace is the one and only baseline for foreign aid that puts America First. There is no better home than USDA for this agriculture appropriated, farm bill authorized program, to rebuild and restore Food for Peace in a way that is more effective at putting America First.

Thank you again for your support of this critical provision to move Food for Peace to USDA in the FY26 agriculture spending bill.

Sincerely,

- American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Maritime Congress  
American Maritime Officers  
American Maritime Officers Service  
American Soybean Association  
APL  
Bunge Milling Inc  
California Wheat Commission  
Clarksons EAST LLC  
Colorado Wheat Administrative Committee  
Didion Milling, Inc  
DRY BULK AMERICA LLC  
Grain Millers - Agricor  
Heartland Goodwill Enterprises  
Hopkinsville Milling Company  
Idaho Grain Producers Association  
Idaho Wheat Commission  
ILWU Washington Area District Council  
Inland Cape Fine Grind LLC  
Inlandboatmen’s Union of the Pacific, Marine Division ILWU  
International Dairy Foods Association  
International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots  
Kansas Association of Wheat Growers  
Kansas Farm Bureau  
Kansas Sorghum Producers  
Kansas Wheat Commission  
Liberty Maritime Corporation  
LifeLine Foods  
Lone Star Integrated Distribution  
SeaTac Packaging  
SEMO Milling LLC  
South Dakota Wheat Commission  
Southern Gulf Packaging & Logistics  
Texas Wheat Producers Association  
Tiger Soy LLC  
Transportation Institute  
Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO  
TVS, Inc  
U.S. Dairy Export Council

Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association  
Marine Firemen’s Union  
Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial Development  
Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO  
Midwest Dry Bean Coalition  
Montana Grain Growers Association  
National Association of Waterfront Employers  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Shipping of America  
National Sorghum Producers  
Navy League of the United States  
Nebraska Dry Pea and Lentil Commission  
Nebraska Wheat Board  
Nebraska Wheat Growers Association  
North American Millers’ Association  
North Dakota Grain Growers Association  
North Dakota Wheat Commission  
Northarvest Bean Growers Association  
Northeast Chartering Group, LLC  
Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association  
Oklahoma Wheat Commission  
Oregon Wheat Growers League  
Pacific Northwest Waterways Association  
Port of Lake Charles  
REPCO  
Sailors’ Union of the Pacific  
Seafarers International Union  
U.S. Peanut Federation  
U.S. Wheat Associates  
UNISHIPPING SAS  
US Dry Bean Council  
US Ocean  
USA Rice  
Washington Association of Wheat Growers  
Washington Grain Commission  
Wyoming Wheat Marketing Commission

## HOW TO STAY SAFE IN THE SUN

Working on the sunny days while staying safe and protected!

### Always wear sunscreen.

Apply sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher at least 15 minutes before going out. Reapply often.

### Wear protective clothing.

Cover up with long sleeves and pants. Put on a wide brim hat to protect your face and neck.

### Wear sunglasses.

Keep your eyes protected with sunglasses that are designed to block UV rays.

### Don't stay out in the sun too long.

Limit your time in the sun, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM. Seek shade if you can.

### Know your own skin.

Regularly check your skin for any changes or anything unusual. See a doctor if needed.





# SUP PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## MATSON NAVIGATION

**Offshore Agreement:** In accordance with Section 36 of the General Rules of the Agreement between Matson Navigation Company and the SIU Pacific District, there shall be a three (3.0) percent increase on all rates of pay and wage related items (over time, supplemental benefits, etc.) effective July 1, 2025. The General Rules also includes a provision for the increase of \$0.25 per manday contribution to the Andrew Furuseth School of Seamanship effective July 1, 2025.

A cost-of-living increase shall also be made (if applicable) based on comparing the May Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U), as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, to the previous May Consumer Price Index. An increase in this index above four (4.00) percent, not to exceed five (5.00) percent, shall be added to the base wage effective July 1, 2025. The publishing date for May 2025 CPI is June 12, 2025.

**Maintenance Agreement (Paint and Rigging Gang):** Under Section 20 of the SUP - Matson Maintenance Agreement will receive the same economic benefits (3%) in the General Rules.

**CV-700:** Under Section 2 of the 2023 Memorandum of understanding between Matson Navigation Company and the SIU Pacific District unions covering the operation of the CV-700 class vessel the C/V Kamokuiki there will be a three (3.0) percent increase in wages and wage related items effective July 1, 2025.

Mr. Chairman, I recommend allocation of the entire negotiated Matson percentage increases to wages and wage related items for all agreements.

## PATRIOT CONTRACT SERVICES

**Watson Class:** In April 2024 former SUP President Dave Connolly reported that Military Sealift Command (MSC) program manger for the Watson Class contract had given preliminary notification that the U.S. Army planned to wind down their pre-positioning of cargo at sea. They would move to make prepositioned cargo land based. The decision was driven by strategic and budgetary considerations.

On May 21, 2025, on a maritime industry conference call we were given an update on the plan. Three ships will be turned over to the Navy and put into reduced operating status under MARAD on October 1, 2025. Another ship will do the same on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, another on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, and the final Army ship on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026. The *USNS Dahl* and *USNS Sisler* will remain FOS as they carry cargo for the U.S. Marines. We do not know which three ships will transition to ROS on October 1<sup>st</sup> at this time.

This is an unfortunate but anticipated move that we do not agree with. The U.S. Army will no longer have “ready to sail” cargo strategically pre-positioned around the globe. They will now rely on MARAD to activate ROS vessels in the continental U.S., then pick up the cargo at a different port, before making their voyage to where the cargo needs to be. This seems to be a very short-sighted budgetary decision. Labor and management will remain engaged with the House and Senate on this matter.

**Haina Patriot:** I forgot to include in last month’s presidents report that on April 15, the Union received notice from the Military Sealift Command that the agency intends to exercise option period 2 of contract number N3220523C4018, which covers the operation and maintenance of the *Haina Patriot*. The contract period is June 29, 2025, through June 28, 2026. Patriot Contract Services is the ship operator. While the operating contract renews at the end of June the wage increase will not be until October 1, 2025.

**Allied Pacific:** On May 6, 2025, Emily Black, head of Marine Personnel for PCS notified the union that while the *Allied Pacific* is in the shipyard the watch standers would be switched to AB maintenance/day workers, which requires a higher rate of pay. At the end of May the crew reported that their wages did not get switched to the higher rate of pay. I contacted Patriot Payroll about this immediately and we are working to resolve the payroll issue.

## APL MARINE SERVICES

On June 2nd MFOW President Anthony Poplawski and I were notified by Gregory Doyle that APL Marine Services had received permission to move the Maritime Security Program (MSP) operating agreement from the *APL Oceania* to the *President LB Johnson*. This has no effect if you are working on either ship as the SUP contract remains in full force. This was a strategic move to allow the *President LB Johnson* to carry aid cargo. Normally there is a three year wait rule on aid cargo, but that does not apply to ships enrolled in MSP.

## FISCAL YEAR PROPOSED BUDGET 2026, MARITIME HIGHLIGHTS

- \$151.5 million for US Merchant Marine Academy.
- \$90 million for State Maritime Academy Operations.
- \$550 million for Port Infrastructure Development Program.
- \$105 million for Assistance to Small Shipyards.
- \$372 million for Maritime Security Program.
- \$120 million for Tanker Security Program.
- \$40 million for the Federal Maritime Commission.

The proposed amount for the Maritime Security Program (MSP) is \$28 million short of the requested amount that we have lobbied for. The Maritime Administration (MARAD) had planned to use available carryover funds to raise stipend payments under the Maritime Security Program (MSP) to the fully authorized levels, continuing this practice until such funds were exhausted. However, this plan has encountered resistance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Due to these constraints,

MARAD is now considering selectively withholding payments from certain MSP-enrolled vessels in order to allocate the limited funds toward paying full authorized stipends to a smaller group of vessels.

## CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF LABOR UNIONS

The Executive Board meeting of California Federation of Labor Unions held its regular meeting in Sacramento on June 4, 2025. Executive Secretary Treasurer Lorena Gonzalez briefed the Committee on the status of the Federation, as well as pending legislation and legal matters. Below are some of the topics covered, but not limited to:

- AB 288 California’s Right to Organize Act.
- Federal Budget status, forecast, and impacts on federal workers and the public sector.
- Impact on healthcare jobs, costs, and access.
- Ballot initiative reform.
- 2026 Endorsement Timeline.
- Preparing for 2026 Priority Races.

## RRF

The Cape Hudson and *Cape Henry* are currently in Full Operation Status (FOS) and actively engaged in missions. Credit goes to the branches for successfully dispatching qualified crews to both ships, ensuring that we meet our contractual obligations without delay.

As we look ahead, it’s essential to keep up this momentum. With three Watson Class vessels set to enter Reduced Operating Status (ROS) later this year, timely crew placement will be more critical than ever. These activations are expected to continue, and our ability to fill billets quickly will remain a top priority.

To members who may be uncertain about accepting these assignments: ask your agent for the pay scale. When you account for the daily wage, vacation, and overtime rate, compensation is nearly identical to APL contracts. Both watchstanders and dayworkers operate on a standard 40-hour work week, with all weekend work paid as overtime. These jobs offer solid compensation, don’t overlook them.

## HOLIDAYS

**Kamehameha Day:** All SUP halls will be closed on Wednesday, June 11th in observance of Kamehameha Day. In accordance with the Matson Agreement, Kamehameha Day is a paid holiday for those employed on Matson vessels at sea or in port and for members working under the Maintenance and Extra Maintenance Agreements.

**Juneteenth or National Independence Day:** All SUP halls will be closed on Thursday, June 19th in celebration of Juneteenth or National Independence Day which is a national holiday. It is a contract holiday for commercial companies APL and Matson.

**Independence Day:** All SUP halls will be closed on Friday, July 4<sup>th</sup> in observance of Independence Day. All work performed at sea or in port is paid at the overtime rate under all SUP Contracts.

## ACTION TAKEN

M/S to concur in the full allocation of negotiated Matson percentage increases to wages and wage related items. (Odien, several). Carried.

M/S to concur in the balance of the Presidents report. (Payne, several). Carried.

Matt Henning



**M/V Lurline crew on the starboard bridgewing.**  
From left to right: Marc Dulay, Bosun David Ibarra, OS Mohamed Ayache, Jay Rezada, Julie Ortiz, Rex Simbre, and Manny Rezada.



# Mexican Navy Tall Ship *Cuauhtémoc* Collides with Brooklyn Bridge

*continued from page 1*

international voyage. “She was so proud to represent Mexico,” said Sánchez’s mother, Lourdes Salinas, in a televised interview from Veracruz. “She said she wanted to see the world and serve her country. We never imagined this would be the way she’d come home.” At least 19 others were injured, including officers and training staff. Emergency responders from the NYPD, FDNY, and Coast Guard acted quickly, with ferry boats also helping to evacuate the injured. The incident was deeply felt in both Mexico and the United States. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum posted on social media: “We are devastated by the loss of two brave cadets from the *Cuauhtémoc*. Their spirit and service will not be forgotten. We extend our deepest condolences to their families and stand in solidarity with the Mexican Navy.”

Early NTSB findings suggest that mechanical failure in the ship’s propulsion system may have been the primary cause. Crucially, the tugboat that had been assigned to assist the *Cuauhtémoc* was not tethered to the vessel at the time of departure. Without a physical line connecting the ships, the tug was unable to prevent the vessel from drifting. “This could have been prevented with standard tow protocol,” said maritime safety consultant Carl Benson. “The fact that no emergency signals or radio distress calls were made before the impact is also troubling. There appears to have been a failure in both machinery and procedure.”

In response, Mexican Navy officials pledged full cooperation with U.S. authorities and launched their own internal review. Vice Admiral Alejandro Martínez of the Mexican Navy told press:

“We mourn the loss of our cadets. We will do everything in our power to find out exactly what went wrong and ensure it never happens again.”

The *Cuauhtémoc* is more than just a training ship — it’s a floating ambassador of Mexican heritage. Commissioned in 1982 and named after the last Aztec emperor, it has visited more than 50 countries and logged hundreds of thousands of nautical miles. Its crew of cadets undergo rigorous training and often participate in international naval parades and cultural exchanges. Now, the ship sits moored in Brooklyn, its shattered masts a reminder of the fragility of even the most majestic vessels. “To see her in that condition broke my heart,” said Maria Esquivel, a former cadet who sailed on the ship in 2017. “She represents discipline, honor, and the future of our Navy. This accident is a national tragedy.”

The goodwill mission has been temporarily suspended. The surviving cadets, many traumatized, were flown back to Veracruz on May 31. The Mexican Navy announced that they will continue their training aboard the ARM Usumacinta, a modern amphibious ship, though the updated itinerary remains unclear. “Our mission continues, and we will carry the memory of our fallen shipmates with us,” said Captain Luis Moya, commanding officer of the *Cuauhtémoc*, in an emotional address. “They gave their lives in service. We owe it to them to move forward — safely, respectfully, and united.”

As both nations await the final investigation findings, the tragedy aboard the *Cuauhtémoc* serves as a sobering lesson in maritime safety, coordination, and respect for the sea. It also reminds us of the dedication of the young men and women who serve — not always in war, but in peace, in diplomacy, and in quiet acts of national pride. Their voyage was meant to unite continents. Instead, it now unites two countries in grief, reflection, and a shared commitment to ensuring such a disaster never happens again.

# Gray Whale Sightings on the Rise in SF Bay

A concerning rise in gray whale deaths has been observed in the San Francisco Bay Area in 2025. As of early June, 15 whales—14 gray whales and one juvenile minke whale — have been found dead, with six of these deaths occurring between May 21 and May 28. This spike in fatalities coincides with an unprecedented number of gray whale sightings in the bay. Researchers have confirmed 33 individual gray whales in the area this year, a significant increase from just six sightings in 2024. Notably, about one-third of these whales have remained in the bay for at least 20 days, exhibiting a range of body conditions from healthy to emaciated. While necropsies have identified vessel strikes as the cause of death in three cases, the majority of fatalities remain unexplained due to challenges such as advanced decomposition and inaccessible locations hindering thorough examinations.

The increased presence of gray whales in the bay may be linked to broader envi-

ronmental changes. Scientists suggest that declining Arctic food sources, possibly due to climate change and retreating sea ice, are influencing whale migration patterns, leading them to forage in atypical areas like San Francisco Bay.

This situation mirrors previous "Unusual Mortality Events" recorded between 2019 and 2023, during which the gray whale population experienced a significant decline. In response, organizations such as the California Academy of Sciences and the Marine Mammal Center are collaborating with the San Francisco Harbor Safety Committee and the U.S. Coast Guard to implement measures aimed at reducing vessel strikes and protecting these marine mammals.

Authorities are urging boaters to be vigilant and report any whale sightings or strandings to local marine authorities. Public awareness and cooperation are crucial in addressing this ongoing environmental concern.

# Unions Resist Trump’s Immigration Raids

*continued from page 1*

Rosa Jiménez, a hotel housekeeper and UNITE HERE member. “And we will not be pushed back into the shadows.”

The union response comes as Trump doubles down on a new immigration platform ahead of the 2025 election. In recent speeches, he has called for the use of the National Guard to detain and deport undocumented immigrants, reintroduced the idea of a mass deportation force, and vowed to crack down on so-called “sanctuary cities” like Los Angeles.

Trump spokespersons say the former president’s plan is about restoring order and protecting American jobs. “Illegal immigration depresses wages and displaces American workers,” campaign advisor Jason Miller said in a statement.

“President Trump will enforce the law, union bosses should be more concerned about protecting American citizens than shielding lawbreakers.” But union leaders say that’s a false narrative, and one that ignores the essential role immigrant labor plays in sectors like agriculture, hospital-ity, logistics, and construction.

“If you remove these workers, entire industries grind to a halt,” said Lorena Gonzalez, head of the California Labor Federation. “This is not just about immigration; this is about who we are as a country and a workforce.” Many unions are now pledging resources to support legal defense funds, organize workplace trainings on workers’ rights during immigration enforcement, and mobilize voters against candidates supporting Trump-style immigration crackdowns.

# Tanks, Troops, and Trump: Controversy Swells Around \$45 Million Birthday Parade

On Saturday, June 14, 2025, Washington, D.C. will host a massive militarystyle parade that doubles as the U.S. Army’s 250th anniversary celebration and President Donald Trump’s 79th birthday. Originally planned as a modest festival, the event has been expanded this year to include a lavish parade, timed precisely to coincide with Flag Day, drawing some patriotic support but mostly criticism. The festivities will feature approximately 6,600–6,700 soldiers, 150 military vehicles (including around 28–30 Abrams main battle tanks), and more than 50 aircraft, such as helicopters and vintage warplanes. A Golden Knights parachute jump, historic uniforms, live bands, a concert, and a fireworks display will round out the celebrations.

The estimated cost falls between \$35 million and \$45 million, a sizable increase over previous iterations. That figure also includes upwards of \$16 million for logistical and infrastructure needs, including road repairs and protective measures for city streets. The expenditure will eclipse previous parades such as the 1991 Gulf War celebration, which cost around \$8 million.

Tank movement along Constitution Avenue prompted the Army Corps of Engineers to place heavy steel plates—one inch thick and 4’x8’ to 8’x20’ in size—at 13 key locations where tracked vehicles will pivot, alongside new rubber pads on

tank tracks to minimize road damage. The Army has pledged to cover any additional repair costs.

On the security front, the event has been designated a National Special Security Event, involving roundtheclock operations by the Secret Service, FBI, Capitol Police, National Guard, and D.C. law enforcement. Measures include metal fencing around the National Mall, multiple checkpoints, Magnetometers, and robust aerial support, all in place to manage crowds expected to reach up to 200,000 spectators.

The event has drawn sharp criticism across party lines. Some Republicans have publicly declined invitations, labeling the parade as an extravagant vanity project or “unAmerican” spectacle. Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) said the event “cheapens our republic” and likened it to “something you’d see in Pyongyang, not Pennsylvania Avenue.” Congressional Democrats, including Reps. Salud Carbajal and Wesley Bell, have

questioned the funding allocation, noting that military budgets have been cut by nearly 8% this fiscal year. Veterans themselves are divided; while some see it as a fitting tribute to the Army, others argue that it politicizes the military and distracts from real troop needs such as barracks upgrades and housing improvements. Activist groups have scheduled widespread protests under the banner “No Kings Day,” framing the parade as an authoritarian display of power. Over 1,500 protests are planned nationwide, including major counterrallies in the Bay Area. Trump has warned that dissenters will be “met with very big force”— a comment

that has sparked further backlash over free speech concerns.

While the Army has celebrated its founding on June 14 since 1775, fullscale military parades are rare in the United States. The last such parade occurred in 1991 to celebrate the Gulf War victory, while previous efforts under Trump’s first term, such as his planned 2018 Veterans Day parade and 2017 Bastille Day, inspired spectacle, were either scaled back or canceled due to cost and logistics. This weekend’s event merges military ceremony, political theater, and Trump’s personal branding into a single, loud statement.

## MADE IN AMERICA

### Cookout Shopping List

- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Ball Park hot dogs       | Heinz ketchup        |
| Hebrew National hot dogs | Lay’s brand chips    |
| Gianelli sausages        | Good Humor ice cream |
| Sara Lee buns            | Pepsi                |
| French’s mustard         | Barq’s root beer     |

## TEXT MADE TO 235246

Find more union barbecue items at [go.aflcio.org/UnionBBQ](https://go.aflcio.org/UnionBBQ).



# King Kamehameha: The Warrior Who United the Hawaiian Islands

On the lava-swept slopes of Kohala on the Big Island of Hawaii, a child was born in the mid-18th century under a prophecy that he would one day become a great ruler. That child grew into Kamehameha the Great, the legendary king who united the Hawaiian Islands under one rule for the first time in history and laid the foundations of a Hawaiian kingdom that would endure for nearly a century. Kamehameha’s legacy is so profound that Hawaii still celebrates Kamehameha Day on June 11 — a state holiday filled with floral parades, hula, and ceremonies honoring his life, leadership, and vision.

Kamehameha was born around 1758, during a time when the Hawaiian Islands were divided among warring chiefs. His birth, according to legend, was accompanied by a strange celestial event — possibly Halley’s Comet — which Hawaiian priests interpreted as a sign that a great leader had been born. Raised in relative secrecy for his safety, Kamehameha grew strong and skilled in warfare, eventually earning respect for his strength, intelligence, and leadership. He came of age as Hawaii experienced increasing contact with the outside world, including traders, missionaries, and explorers like Captain James Cook.

By the 1780s, Kamehameha began his campaign to unite the islands. With the help of foreign advisors and European weapons — including cannons and mus-

kets — Kamehameha employed both diplomacy and battle to bring rival chiefs under his control. His most significant battle came in 1795 at Nu’uanu Pali on the island of Oahu. There, Kamehameha’s forces pushed opposing warriors over a steep cliff, securing his control over most of the islands. Only Kauai and Niihau remained outside his rule. Rather than invade, Kamehameha negotiated with the island’s chief, Kaumuali’i, who eventually agreed to become a vassal under Kamehameha in 1810. With that, the Hawaiian Islands were unified for the first time.

“He was not just a warrior but a visionary,” said Hawaiian cultural historian Pualani Kanahoe. “He saw beyond the tribal wars of his time and imagined a strong, united kingdom that could survive in a world that was rapidly changing.”

Kamehameha ruled with a blend of traditional Hawaiian values and pragmatic leadership. He instituted the Law of the Splintered Paddle (*Kānāwai Māmalahoe*), which protected civilians from harm and ensured the safety of the weak and defenseless. The law remains enshrined in the Hawaii State Constitution today. He also worked to regulate trade, maintain peace between former enemies, and limit foreign influence while benefiting from new technologies and goods. Kamehameha’s reign marked a period of relative stability and prosperity in the islands.

When Kamehameha died in 1819, he left

behind a unified kingdom, governed by his descendants and eventually recognized by major world powers. His burial place remains a secret, known only to the few entrusted to hide his bones in accordance with ancient tradition. Today, Kamehameha is not only remembered as a powerful warrior but as a unifier, protector, and father of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Statues of him stand in downtown Honolulu, at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., and in his birthplace of Kohala — all adorned with vibrant lei each June 11.

“He exemplified the spirit of aloha and pono — compassion and righteousness — but he could also be fierce and determined,” said Maui resident Kalei Makana. “His story inspires us still, especially in a world where leadership can feel divided and uncertain.”

Though the Hawaiian monarchy was overthrown in 1893 and the islands were annexed by the United States in 1898, Kamehameha’s legacy endures. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest indigenous leaders in Pacific history. Cultural revivals in the 20th and 21st centuries have renewed interest in Kamehameha’s life and values. His unification of the islands is seen as a reminder of what Hawai’i can accomplish when guided by strength, wisdom, and a shared vision for its people.

King Kamehameha the Great’s life remains one of the most remarkable stories

in world history — not only for his military achievements but for his foresight in leadership and his commitment to unity. He did not seek power for its own sake, but to bring peace and security to his people. As Hawaii celebrates Kamehameha Day each June, the islands remember a king who stood tall in war, ruled wisely in peace, and whose spirit continues to shape the cultural and political landscape of Hawaii to this day.



## Supplying Victory: The Merchant Marines on D-Day

continued from page 1

given veteran status for decades.

The dangers were real and the losses significant. At least 31 merchant ships were sunk during the Normandy campaign. Hundreds of Merchant Mariners lost their lives, and many more were wounded. Despite being civilians, they showed resilience and courage equal to any combat unit. Their contribution ensured that the Allied forces could establish and expand their beachhead, which was critical in the weeks following the initial assault. Their sacrifices often went unrecognized. Merchant Mariners were not entitled to military honors or veterans’ benefits, despite their central role in wartime logistics. It wasn’t until 1988 — 44 years after D-Day — that U.S. Merchant Mariners of World War II were granted veteran status and the benefits that came with it.

The role of the Merchant Marine extended well beyond D-Day. Throughout the European campaign, they continued to bring in supplies, weapons, and

reinforcements. Without their tireless efforts, the momentum of the Allied advance would have stalled. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower once acknowledged, “When final victory is ours, there is no organization that will share its credit more deservedly than the Merchant Marine.” Their involvement also relieved the burden on military logistics, allowing the U.S. Navy to concentrate on combat operations. Merchant ships helped maintain an unbroken supply chain that would fuel not only the success of the Normandy campaign but the final push into Germany.

For decades, Merchant Mariners’ wartime efforts remained in the shadows of history. Historians and veterans’ groups have since worked to highlight their contributions. In recent years, museums, documentaries, and commemorative events have begun to shed light on their service. The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy even holds special D-Day remembrances to honor alumni and civilian mariners who participated.

Still, the broader public often overlooks their stories. Unlike other branches of the military, the Merchant Marine had no parades or formal welcome home. Many returned from war to resume civilian life without medals, pensions, or even thanks.

On D-Day, while soldiers stormed the beaches and planes darkened the skies, the Merchant Marines quietly made history. Their courage, sacrifice, and steadfastness were instrumental in the Allied victory. As we honor the memory of June 6, 1944, it is vital to remember not only the warriors with rifles in hand, but also the sailors who kept the ships — and the war effort — afloat.

The Merchant Marines didn’t wear standard-issue uniforms or receive military honors at the time, but they were every bit as essential to victory. Their role on D-Day remains one of the great untold chapters of World War II — deserving of remembrance, respect, and gratitude.



### Dispatcher’s Report

Headquarters — March 2025

Deck	
Bosun .....	4
Carpenter .....	0
MM .....	3
AB .....	21
OS.....	7
Standby S.F. ....	18
Total Deck Jobs Shipped .....	53
Total Deck B, C & D Shipped.....	42
Engine/Steward	
QMED .....	0
Pumpman .....	0
Oiler .....	0
Wiper .....	0
Steward .....	0
Cook.....	0
Messman.....	0
Total E&S Jobs Shipped .....	0
Total E&S B, C, & D Shipped.....	0
Total Jobs Shipped-All Depts.....	53
Total B, C, & D Shipped-All Depts.	42
Total Registered “A” .....	25
Total Registered “B” .....	26
Total Registered “C” .....	9
Total Registered “D” .....	25



Fom left to right:C ostica Oprisoru, Adan Gonzalez, Jose McDonald, (rear) Steven Riley, (front) Gabriel McDonald Sr. Eric McDonald, (Rear) Grant “Eli” Wegger, (Front) Elizabeth “Lucy” Gage, Leo Martinez, Milton Caballero behind flowers, Ken “Sin bad” Delaney, David Mercer, Daniel Tin Tun, Mark Hurley and Aaron Mitchell great support from SUP this year.



# SUP BRANCH REPORTS

## HONOLULU

May 2025

**SHIPPING:** The following jobs were dispatched for the month: 2 AB Day steady, 4 AB Watch steady, 1 AB Watch Relief, 1 Ordinary, 3 USNS AB, and 2 USNS Ordinary. There were 7 Standbys Jobs dispatched for the month.  
**REGISTERED:** 9 A-Cards, 24 B-Cards, 4 C-Cards, and 3 D-Cards.  
**SHIPS CHECKED:** *USNS Charlton*, *USNS Watson*, *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 is a little tight for Honolulu. Again, in my opinion, permit members would be wise to take whatever comes up on the board right now, and anyone thinking about flying here to register may want to check and double check that they are financially secure to wait it out over here (Standby jobs are at a bare minimum right now), and that all their USCG / Medical documents, as well as any required certificates are valid before they come. There's a lot of guys on the beach right now.

I attended several meetings this month that addressed the potential needs for mariner training facilities here in Hawai'i, as well as the anticipated negative impacts that tariffs and ship drawdowns would have on our industry. A contradictory statement, I know. But, regardless

of what the near term future may hold. I believe we need to keep moving forward. Because it's been my experience that the maritime industry is cyclical ( meaning what has happened before, will eventually happen again), and when we are on the upswing again, we will need to be ready with mariners who are not only certified. But qualified.

We are trying to put another LNG class together here in Honolulu sometime in July. If you're here and want to take this training? Let me know. We need a minimum number of members to participate in order to make the class possible. There are currently 12 spots available.

Lastly, while the rumors that some of our USNS ships are slated to move to ROS status are true at this moment, the schedule changes are not immediate, and we still need these billets to be filled. Also, the current administration has been known to strongly influence or change policy decisions at any moment. All Union officials are working hard to change this shortsighted plan, and I still believe those holding the strings on this issue will come to their senses and will reverse course. We can only control what we can control. What we can control is holding up our end of the deal, by keeping these billets fully filled in a timely manner.

Faternally Submitted,  
Patrick Max Weisbarth  
Honolulu Branch Agent

## WILMINGTON

May 2025

**Shipping:** Bosun: 4; AB/W, 7; AB/D, 3; OS/ STOS, 1; GVA/GUDE, 0; Standby: 31  
Total Jobs Shipped: 46.  
**Registrations:** A 31, B 25, C 4,D 3.  
**Ships Visited:** Making regular visits as time permits me. Also keeping in contact by phone and email.  
**Agent's Report**

Shipping in Wilmington is good, plenty of AB jobs. Minimal OS jobs. I want to urge all ordinary seamen that have enough time to get their STOS. So we can get you on commercial ships like Apl and Matson. We are still in need of ABs for our patriot contract ships. Come in and

register for work if you are interested in training come fill out an application.  
Special thanks to all those who attended maritime day. It was a great success and a wonderful turnout. SUP had the biggest presence to attend.  
Meetings for the Labor Day parade have begun Labor Day parade will be held September 1, 2025 save the date come in for more information about the Labor Day, March in the weeks to come  
Always stay on top of documentation and dues.

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

## SEATTLE

May 2025

**Shipping:** 2 Boatswain (B); 2 Navy AB (A, B); 2 AB/W (B, C); AB/D (A, B); 2 OS (C, D); 2 GUDE (D); 4 Standy AB (1A, 2B, C)  
**Registered:** 6 A card for a total of 10 , 3 B card for a total of 14, 1 C card for a total of 7, 1 D card for a total of 4.  
**Agent's Report**  
With the impending drawdown of the six Army Watson Class vessels, those looking to upgrade their endorsements should take advantage of the available

FOS time that remains. Shipping jobs that will gain day for day seetime credit for entry level is going to be greatly reduced and I recommend you do the full extent of your dispatch to apply towards upgrade. You should consider cutting your vacation short and return to work earlier than planned as well.  
  
Faternally,  
Brandon Bohannon  
Seattle Port Agent

# VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

April 2025

**USNS Pililaau** — Kayla Doiron, delegate. Ship tied up in Blount Island Florida and is getting ready for Diego Garcia voyage. Fernando Rigonan, bosun.  
**USNS Seay** — Zack Jacoby, delegate. The ship is in Blount Island Florida preparing for a voyage to Saipan. Frank Duffin, bosun.  
**USNS Watkins** — Ship with full crew in Saipan. Stephen Alarcon, bosun.  
**USNS Watson** — Ali' Aleka, delegate. Ship docked in Baltimore Maryland, no major beefs reported. Joshua Sheldrick, bosun.  
**Allied Pacific** — David Pelczmann, delegate. The ship arrived in shipyard on May 6 and the watch standers were re rated to maintenance/day workers. This entitled them to a high rate of pay, which Patriot did not initially make. SUP is working with the company to resolve the pay issue. Arturo Orcino, bosun.  
**USNS Sisler** — Noel Romero, Delegate. Successful Balikatan mission completed, ship arrived in Saipan early May. No major beefs reported. Jeff Nicholas, bosun.  
**USNS Dahl** — Shoal Nervo, delegate. Recently Dispatched Gertrude Vego LSE AB. Ship in Busan Korea, no major beefs reported. Perciverando Quiteles, bosun.  
**USNS Soderman** — Gabriel Moreno, delegate. Tied up alongside Red Cloud in Norfolk, VA. Gonzalo Sarra, bosun.  
**USNS Red Cloud** — Jason Alonzo, delegate. Tied up in Norfolk alongside Soderman. Frank Walker, Bosun  
**Cape Hudson** — Ventrell Johnson, delegate. Departed San Francisco for Cobra Gold mission. Jesus Hermosillo, bosun.  
**Cape Horn** — Cape Horn assisted Cape Hudson crew in preparation for Cobra Gold mission. Christian Demesa, bosun.  
**Cape Henry** — Ian Serra, delegate. Reports no major beefs. Ship is heading for Darwin, Australia. After Darwin, next port Melbourne Australia with Subic Bay Philippines to follow. Marc Calairo, bosun.  
If you take small arms training aboard your ship, please make sure to email Berit the certificates after.  
The *Dahl*, *Sisler*, *Pililaau*, and *Seay* all require three LSE trained AB's on the ship. If you are interested in increasing your job opportunities, please contact me to start the process of applying for a CAC card.  
Chinese Visa's are becoming a common requirement for commercial shipping, please consider getting one. If you need a letter to visit the Chinese Consulate please contact me.  
Sam Worth

# BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT

April 2025

**Maunalei** — Delegate: Jerome Pope. Last joined the vessel in Oakland. There was talk of a potential lay - up after discharging cargo, and Matson seemed unsure of next steps amid news of a temporary tariff reduction. The following morning, the vessel departed for Los Angeles, then on to Shanghai, China. Robert Reed is serving as Bosun.  
**Mahimahi** — Oak #62. Delegate: Dennis Sumague. Reported a smooth stay in Oakland. The ship departed for Los Angeles without issue. However, there's an ongoing concern with sideports being left open. Engineers deny knowledge, but the crew is keeping a closer eye on the matter. Izzy Idris is Bosun.  
**Kamokuk** —. Delegate: Terry Carter (currently in Kwajalein) The vessel is lying alongside the dock waiting for clearance. Rumors suggest a potential lay - up, which we hope is not true. A two-year charter would be ideal to keep this ship running. Ernie Lagramada is Bosun.  
**Manoa** —. Oakland #62. Delegate: Paul Harseny. Arrived on schedule, no delays. On the Southern Triangle, weather conditions have been improving each trip. Last trip, Matson reps discussed the C9 breakdown and future plans. OT has started to be cut back. Cody Clark is Bosun.  
**RJ Pfeiffer** —. Oakland #62. Delegate: Jill Holeman. Departed on schedule for Honolulu, due in on the 6th for a short stay before heading to the Singapore shipyard. Reid Barlow is Bosun.  
**Mokihana** — Still idle at Berth #23 Oakland for six months. Last the Union heard, Pasha was supposed to charter it—but that never materialized, per Matson.  
**APL** — Has been calling for Gangway Security regularly — sometimes twice a week. Members: If you can't stay for the full duration of the ship's time in port, please don't take the job!  
**President LB Johnson** —. Oakland #56. Delegate: Elixor Ponce. New delegate to be elected before departure. Good ship with a solid deck gang. Steward department has greatly improved—what a difference a good steward makes! Weather permitting, work is steady. David Reining is Bosun.

**APL Eagle** —. In at Jebel Ali. Delegate: Romelito Linatoc. It's heating up—this run is tough, not for everyone. Brother Hussein was recently hospitalized but has returned home safely. We wish him a full recovery. Ali Ghaleb has relieved as Bosun.  
**President JQ Adams** —. Oakland #56. Delegate: Cliff Patrick. Smooth trip, good weather. Ship is progressing well—deck department organizing stores, and steward department has stepped up. Hats off to them. Bosun Valeriy Goncharov is doing a great job and considering a well — deserved trip off.  
**Delegate: Chris Auer.** Training continues for temporary deckhands to become Operators. Either you have it—or you don't. We need members who can run the boats, not just stand by the ladder. Dock Bosun Geoffrey Knight is doing a bang — up job.  
Commercial shipping is slowly picking up. If you have Government certificates, your prospects are even better—expect 4–6 month assignments, with flights from your home state to the ship.  
Members in need of BST Refresher, LNG Training, MMC Renewal, or assistance with a Chinese Visa application—please see your local agent to fill out a training application.  
Roy Tufono

### SUP Pensioner Join the Ranks of Retirement

Ernesto Legarte

Permit No. 18222

June 1, 2025