

October 15, 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

As Presidents of America's seafaring unions we may not always agree on everything but on this – the importance of electing Senator Barack Obama to the office of President of the United States – we stand as one. We are, without exception, united in our conviction that the future growth and viability of the U.S.-flag fleet and the jobs of American maritime workers in all segments of our industry depend heavily and directly on the election of Senator Barack Obama.

We ask that you and your family think very carefully about how the outcome of this election will affect your job and the jobs of all American maritime workers.

***Think about*** whether you want a President like Barack Obama who will work with us to keep the Jones Act strong and excluded from international trade negotiations. We need a President like Barack Obama who agrees that only U.S.-flag vessels built in American shipyards and crewed by American mariners will carry commerce along our coasts and on our rivers and Great Lakes, rather than a President like John McCain who wants to repeal the Jones Act, a move that would give our jobs away.

***Think about*** whether you want a President like Barack Obama who will work with us to make sure the Maritime Security Program is funded each year. We need a President like Barack Obama who agrees that U.S.-flag vessels and U.S. crews will be available to support our troops and to support our country's economy and security, rather than a President like John McCain who tried to change and weaken this program.

***Think about*** whether you want a President like Barack Obama who supports our cargo preference laws. We need a President like Barack Obama who agrees that American vessels should carry U.S. government cargoes, rather than a President like John McCain who has consistently voted against cargo preference so that foreign vessels with foreign crews would carry U.S. taxpayer-funded commodities.

There is too much at stake in this election for any of us to be misled and sidetracked into looking at things that are not important and relevant. When

all is said and done, this election is about your job, your future and your families' future. We ask that you do what we will be doing on Election Day: **VOTE YOUR JOB!**

Fraternally,

Thomas Bethel, President, American Maritime Officers

Timothy Brown, President, International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots

Donald Keefe, President, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association

Gunnar Lundeberg, President, Sailors' Union of the Pacific

Anthony Poplawski, President, Marine Firemen's Union

Michael Sacco, President, Seafarers International Union