

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



*"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"*  
**M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES**  
*The Official Union Newsletter – "The Word to the Wise"*  
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## **SOLIDARITY WITH ILA ON THE PICKET LINE**

The M.E.B.A. is strongly supporting the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) as they continue efforts to obtain a fair and just contract from the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX) and to limit automation on the docks. USMX represents carriers, terminal operators and port associations. ILA members went on strike at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday when their contract expired. 36 ports from Maine to Texas are now shut down and ILA members are walking the picket line. Many M.E.B.A. members and officials have joined them at waterfront facilities along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts and the membership is encouraged to assist the fight for our ILA brothers and sisters.

Just before the deadline, USMX alleged that it made efforts to reach a last-minute deal by offering enhanced wage increases, retirement fund contributions, better healthcare options, and maintaining the status quo on automation language. But the ILA swiftly turned down the proposal, saying it was "far from meeting the expectations of ILA members in terms of wages and safeguards against automation."

Efforts were underway nationwide to slur unions and paint the ILA as greedy. The ILA released a statement noting that they rejected USMX's "so-called nearly 50% wage increase because it fails to address the demands of our members adequately. They might claim a significant increase, but they conveniently omit that many of our members are operating multi-million-dollar container-handling equipment for a mere \$20 an hour. In some states, the minimum wage is already \$15. Furthermore, our members endure a grueling six-year wage progression before they can even reach the top wage tier, regardless of how many hours they work or the effort they put in." ILA said that, "USMX also overlooks the fact that two-thirds of our members are constantly on call, with no guaranteed employment if no ships are being worked. Our members qualify for benefits only based on the hours they worked the previous year, making them vulnerable if there's a downturn in work. Despite this, there is no incentive within the progression system for hard-working members to advance faster. Regardless of their dedication, they must wait six full years to attain the top wage. Let's be clear: the ILA has been fully prepared to negotiate a fair contract since two years before its expiration. USMX's claim that they are ready to bargain rings hollow when they waited until the eve of a potential strike to present this offer."

Several manufacturers and retailers as well as many Republican members of Congress have asked President Joe Biden to invoke Taft-Hartley Act powers to end the strike. National Association of Manufacturers President Jay Timmons said that, “even a brief disruption could have severe economic repercussions on the manufacturing supply chain. A strike at East and Gulf Coast ports would endanger \$2.1 billion in daily trade and could slash GDP by as much as \$5 billion each day.”

Section 206 of the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947, more commonly known as the Taft-Hartley Act, gives the President the authority to request a court-ordered 80-day cooling-off period, during which companies and unions can work to settle their disputes. But Biden poured cold water on that sentiment saying that he doesn’t believe in Taft-Hartley. The White House said, “Collective bargaining is the best way for workers to get the pay and benefits they deserve. I have urged USMX, which represents a group of foreign-owned carriers, to come to the table and present a fair offer to the workers of the ILA that ensures they are paid appropriately in line with their invaluable contributions. Ocean carriers have made record profits since the pandemic and in some cases profits grew in excess of 800 percent compared to their profits prior to the pandemic. Executive compensation has grown in line with those profits and profits have been returned to shareholders at record rates. It’s only fair that workers, who put themselves at risk during the pandemic to keep ports open, see a meaningful increase in their wages as well...It is time for USMX to negotiate a fair contract with the longshoremen that reflects the substantial contribution they’ve been making to our economic comeback.”

M.E.B.A. and other maritime unions put out statements in support of the ILA during this process and signed off on a Maritime Trades Department (AFL-CIO) release noting, “Much has already been written and aired about how a potential job action would affect the flow of commerce. By contrast, there hasn’t been nearly enough focus on the basic fairness sought by the ILA and (thus far) denied by USMX. Rank-and-file ILA members have made many sacrifices, particularly in recent years, and they deserve a collective bargaining agreement that reflects their importance to our nation’s ports and to the U.S. economy. Strikes are always, without exception, an absolute last resort. That is the case today for the ILA, and it is one more reason why the MTD has their backs. It’s time for management to deliver a contract with fair wages, reasonable approaches to automation, and job security that has been earned over many years.”

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said, “the longshoremen’s fight for a fair contract is the entire labor movement’s fight. As 45,000 members of the ILA strike for a fair contract today, the AFL-CIO and our nearly 13 million members from 60 unions are proud to stand in strong solidarity with them.”

**Note:** After press time, news broke that the progress made on wage increases prompted the parties to agree to an extension of the agreement until January 15. Negotiators will continue to hammer out a final agreement, but in the meantime, dockworkers were set to go back to work on Friday.

### **HELENE FURY RAVAGES TAMPA HALL; G&W FUND SUPPORTING MEMBERS**

Our Union hall in Tampa suffered the consequences of Hurricane Helene after the storm came ashore late Thursday. The hall flooded with almost three feet of water, laying waste to all equipment and furniture and rendering the space on 4333 50<sup>th</sup> Street inoperable and unsuitable to serve the membership.

The M.E.B.A. has begun looking for a new office – either temporary or permanent – to quickly return operations to normal. Until then, jobs going through the Tampa hall will be called at our Jacksonville hall, then routed through Gulf Coast halls before being referred to the Open Jobs Board. There will still be a Tampa membership meeting next week on Thursday, October 10 at 1300 to be conducted at Coppertail Brewery Company, 2601 E. 2nd Ave. in Tampa. Meanwhile, the Tampa hall phone number has been routed to the cell phone of Branch Agent Nicole Greenway for hall-related business.

M.E.B.A.'s Good & Welfare Fund is ready to assist M.E.B.A. families hurt by Hurricane Helene. The G&W is a wonderful cause, but we need to continually replenish the fund to allow additional assistance to members and retirees in times of hardship. The Internal Revenue Service has ruled that the Fund is exempt from Federal Income tax. Stop into a Union hall and see how you can help. In addition, you can support the Fund on the M.E.B.A.'s Member Payment and Update Portal (PUP) that is also used to pay dues and service charges as well as contribute to the Political Action Fund. Visit [www.mebaunion.org](http://www.mebaunion.org) to access the portal where you can also view and update your M.E.B.A. records, including contact information, credentials, and sea time. Please consider making a contribution today to allow the Good & Welfare Fund to lend a hand to M.E.B.A. families now and into the future.

#### **PHILLY SHIPYARD BEGINS WORK ON FIRST OF THREE MATSON NEWBUILDS**

Following a steel cutting ceremony, Philly Shipyard has begun construction on the first of three Aloha Class LNG-fueled containerships to be built for Matson Navigation. At 854 feet long with a carrying capacity of 3,600 TEU, Matson's Aloha Class ships will carry a variety of container sizes and operate at speeds exceeding 23 knots. All three vessels will incorporate "green ship technology" features such as environmentally safe double hull fuel tanks and freshwater ballast systems and will be delivered ready to operate on liquified natural gas. The first vessel will be named MAKUA. The other two will be the MALAMA and MAKENA. Deliveries are scheduled for October 2026, April 2027 and December 2027.

#### **UNAPPROVED COURSES AT GULF COAST MARITIME ACADEMY**

Any members who may have taken any alternate location training at the Gulf Coast Maritime Academy near Tampa, FL should be aware of this notice: An investigation by the Coast Guard has revealed that between January 2018 and November 2023, GCMA failed to provide proper instruction in all Basic Firefighting, Basic Firefighting Refresher, Basic Firefighting Revalidation, and Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) Basic Training courses.

These courses require live firefighting, which was not conducted at the school. The impacted courses did not meet the practical requirements contained in the terms of their respective Coast Guard Approvals. As a result, these courses are not Coast Guard-approved and certificates issued for these courses are invalid. Due to numerous deficiencies identified by Coast Guard auditors found at the school, the National Maritime Center (NMC) withdrew approval letters for all courses. To avoid interruption of the Marine Transportation System, the Coast Guard will allow, for a limited time, mariners who took the Basic Firefighting and STCW Basic Training to retain endorsements from these courses. Upon publication of this bulletin, the NMC will begin contacting each mariner who has submitted a Basic Firefighting or STCW Basic Training course from GCMA in prior or current Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) applications. **These mariners will be required to**

**retake Basic Firefighting or alternatively they may submit a Basic Firefighting Refresher or Basic Firefighting Revalidation course to retain their endorsements.**

No action will be required from mariners who took Basic Firefighting Refresher or Basic Firefighting Revalidation. The mariners who took Basic Firefighting Refresher or Basic Firefighting Revalidation will be notified for awareness that the courses they attended did not meet the practical requirements contained in the terms of their respective Coast Guard Approvals.

**Failure to act:** Mariners who took Basic Firefighting or STCW Basic Training will have until October 1, 2025, to comply with the above requirements. After this date, the NMC will not process any further applications for these mariners until this matter is resolved. Any mariner who does not take action regarding their Basic Firefighting course may be subject to further action to remove the endorsements that require the invalid courses. The NMC will rely on contact information on file to notify affected mariners. Mariners who took the listed courses between January 2018 and November 2023 should monitor their e-mails, phone calls, and physical mail for correspondence from the NMC regarding this matter. Mariners and marine employers with questions should contact the NMC Compliance Investigations Branch at (304) 433-3466 or via e-mail at [MCFITF@uscg.mil](mailto:MCFITF@uscg.mil).

#### **CMES RELEASES 2025 COURSE SCHEDULE**

The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School has issued its 2025 course schedule along with a course application form. Applications for these classes will be accepted through [www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org), by US Mail and by fax (410) 822-7220. Class schedule and registration dates are subject to change.

Applications for classes held between January 1 and June 30, 2025 will be accepted no earlier than November 1, 2024. Applications for classes held between July 1 and December 31, 2025 will be accepted no earlier than May 1, 2025. Applications sent prior to the acceptance dates will be discarded with no notice sent to the applicant. Application forms can be obtained at the M.E.B.A. Union halls, the School website ([www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org)) or by calling the School's Admissions Desk at (410) 822-9600. Note: The CMES is still working with Wartsila to finalize the dates for the Flex Engine classes. Those dates will be released as soon as they are available. The CMES announces the following course offerings for 2025:

**ADVANCED METEOROLOGY** - (1-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - February 10–February 14; October 6–October 10. **ADVANCED PIPE WELDING** - (2-Week Course - 6 students maximum) - September 8–September 19. **ADVANCED SHIPHANDLING** - (2-Week Course - 6 students maximum) - March 3–March 14; September 15–September 26. **ADVANCED STABILITY** - (1-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - February 3–February 7; October 13–October 17. **BST REFRESHER** - (1-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - February 24–February 28; April 14–April 18; July 28–August 1; November 17–November 21. **BST REVALIDATION** - (3-Day Course - 12 students maximum) - January 20–January 22; February 10–February 12; March 10–March 12; March 24–March 26; April 28–April 30; May 19–May 21; June 9–June 11; June 23–June 25; August 18–August 20; September 8–September 10; September 29–October 1; October 20–October 22; December 8–December 10. **CONTAINER REFRIGERATION** - (2-Week Course - 10 students maximum) - February 24–March 7; December 1–December 12. **DAMAGE CONTROL / CBRN** - (1-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - May 12–May 16; September 15–September 19. **DIESEL ENGINEERING** - (6-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - March 10–April 18. **FAST RESCUE BOAT** - (4-Day Course - 5

students maximum) - June 16–June 19; August 25–August 28. **INDUSTRIAL NETWORKING** - (1-Week Course - 10 students maximum) - April 7–April 11; August 11–August 15. **INSTRUMENTATION** - (2-Week Course - 10 students maximum) - February 24–March 7; October 6–October 17. **LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT** - (1-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - April 28 – May 2; November 3 – November 7. **LNG AS A FUEL** - (4-Day Course - 12 students maximum) - January 6–January 9; January 13–January 16; May 5–May 8; May 12–May 15; August 4–August 7; August 11–August 14; September 15–September 18; September 22–September 25; October 6–October 9; October 13–October 16; November 3–November 6; November 10–November 13. **MACHINE SHOP PROFICIENCY** - (2-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - February 24–March 7; October 20–October 31. **MARINE ELECTRIC PROPULSION / HIGH VOLTAGE SAFETY** - (2-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - March 10–March 21; May 12–May 23; August 18–August 29; October 20–October 31. **MEECE** - (1-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - February 3–February 7; May 5–May 9; September 15–September 19; November 10–November 14. **MSC CONMAR** - (2-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - March 10–March 21; June 2–June 13; August 11–August 22; October 20–October 31. **PRACTICAL ELECTRICAL TROUBLESHOOTING** - (2-Week Course - 10 students maximum) – May 12–May 23; June 2–June 13; June 16–June 27; August 4–August 15; August 18–August 29. **PROGRAMMABLE LOGIC CONTROLLERS** – (1-Week Course - 9 students maximum) - January 13–January 17; June 16–June 20; August 25–August 29; December 1–December 5. **REFRIGERATION** - (2-Week Course - 10 students maximum) - January 27–February 7. **SMALL ARMS** - (4-Day Course - 12 students maximum) - May 5–May 8; September 8–September 11. **STEAM ENGINEERING** - (6-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - October 13–November 21. **TANKERMAN DL** - (1-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - April 7–April 11; May 19–May 23 (LV); November 10–November 14 (LV); December 1–December 5. **TIG WELDING** - (2-Week Course - 6 students maximum) - February 3–February 14. **WARTSILA FLEX BASIC LEVEL 1** - (3-Day Course - 12 students maximum) – TBD. **WARTSILA FLEX OPERATOR LEVEL 2** - (1-Week Course - 12 students maximum) – TBD. **WELDING** - (4-Week Course - 12 students maximum) - January 6–January 31; September 22–October 17; October 27–November 21.

### **M.E.B.A. ELECTION: DUPLICATE BALLOT INFORMATION**

TrueBallot, Inc. is serving as the Impartial Administrator for the 2024 M.E.B.A. Election. If you are an M.E.B.A. member and did not receive a ballot – or yours has been lost or destroyed – you can request a duplicate ballot in writing. Contact the Impartial Administrator at: TrueBallot, Inc.; 3 Bethesda Metro Center; Suite 700; Bethesda, MD 20814. *Email: 0212401@trueballot.com*

Please make sure you include your address to send the duplicate ballot. *As stated in the M.E.B.A. By-Laws, if the original ballot and duplicate ballot are both cast, neither ballot shall count.* If you have any questions, please feel free to contact M.E.B.A. Headquarters.

### **VOTERS MUST BE IN GOOD STANDING FOR BALLOT TO COUNT**

Members who are not in good standing by November 15, 2024 (dues paid in accordance with the M.E.B.A. By-Laws through the end of the Fourth Quarter, as applicable) are not eligible to vote in the ongoing M.E.B.A. election. Members are strongly urged to ensure their dues status is secured through the end of the year to guarantee their participation in this year’s officers’ election.

## USE M.E.B.A. WEBSITE DUES PAYMENT OPTION TO IRON OUT LWOP/VACATION DUES LAPSES

Some M.E.B.A. bargaining unit members pay dues by automatic Dues Check-Off (DCO). But when DCO members take vacation or (in the case of the Government fleet) Leave without Pay (LWOP), there are lapses in payroll where dues aren't automatically submitted. Those members can iron out the imbalance from this link:

A "Vacation Pay" option is also available. This is useful for port Engineers and Union officials who can make these payments online. Many members and applicants think that paying online is the most efficient and advantageous manner to remain in good standing. You can get there at the following link: [www.mebaunion.org/pay-your-dues/](http://www.mebaunion.org/pay-your-dues/)

Select the bargaining unit in the "Check Off, Catch-Up" section of the Member Payment & Update Portal and make sure you remain a member in good standing.

### NEXT MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*

Monday, October 7 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

Tuesday, October 8 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.

Wednesday, October 9 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ "Town Hall" Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org)

Thursday, October 10 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, October 11 – Honolulu@1100

-----FINISHED WITH ENGINES-----



***M.E.B.A. does not tolerate assault, or harassment of any kind.  
If you see something, say something – The M.E.B.A. Emergency Hotline  
can be reached at 1-888-519-0018.***

*The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated track record of readiness, safety, and loyalty in answering America's call to action in times of both peace and war is unrivaled in the world. M.E.B.A. HQ – Phone: (202) 638-5355; [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org). For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – [marco@mebaunion.org](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org) Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram. The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School can be contacted at (410) 822-9600 or [www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org). M.E.B.A. Plans is at (410) 547-9111 or [www.mebaplans.org](http://www.mebaplans.org)*