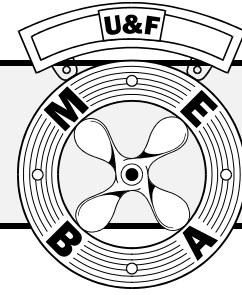


LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



MAY 2008

Congress was focused on economic issues in April with the mortgage crisis and soaring gas prices driving headlines and public opinion polls.

House Passes Coast Guard Authorization

On April 24, 2008, the House passed HR 2830 – FY2008 Coast Guard Authorization. Action now moves to the Senate. Included in this bill are many important components for MEBA Members:

Title X transfers the Administrative Law Judges from the US Coast Guard to the National Transportation Safety Board, giving the NTSB jurisdiction to review the denial, amendment, modification, suspension or revocation of a license or document by the Coast Guard.

Section 211 establishes a merchant mariner medical advisory committee to advise the Secretary of Transportation on medical certification determinations for the issuance of merchant mariner credentials as well as medical standards and guidelines for the physical qualifications of operators of commercial vessels.

Several reports are also commissioned by the bill, including evaluations of USCG processing centers, merchant mariner manning shortages, foreign shipyard work, and merchant mariner document standards risk assessment for LNG degasification facilities.