



## The Deputy Secretary of Transportation

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

May 19, 2011

Mr. Mike Jewell  
President  
Marine Engineers Beneficial Association, AFL-CIO  
444 N. Capitol Street, NW, Ste. 800  
Washington, DC 20001

*MIKE:*  
Dear Mr. Jewell:

Thank you for your recent letter, cosigned by Mr. Timothy A. Brown of the International Organization of Masters, Mates, & Pilots, International Longshoremen's Association, AFL-CIO and Mr. Gunnar Lundeberg of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, Seafarers' International Union of North America. I appreciated the opportunity to speak at the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department, Executive Committee meeting, and to reinforce the bond between labor and transportation. With your help, the Administration will continue to champion the American maritime industry and the American citizens who provide the labor for this critical national asset.

As you know, the U.S. Department of Transportation is focused on transportation policy goals that improve public health and safety, foster livable communities, ensure that transportation assets are maintained in a state of good repair, support the Nation's long-term economic competitiveness, and work to achieve environmental sustainability. A robust marine transportation system is fundamental to achieving these goals. As a result, the Department will continue to advocate for and support a world-class Marine Transportation System.

As you mentioned, the Maritime Security Program (MSP), cargo preference, and coastwise trade laws and programs are essential to maintaining a viable U.S.-flag fleet and protecting national security. The success of these programs is attributable in large measure to the dedication of U.S. mariners and other workers that serve the marine transportation system. With their ongoing support, we will work together to achieve continued success and real growth in the maritime industry.

The success of the MSP speaks for itself. In recognition of this, President Obama signed the continuation of the MSP into law, ensuring its future through 2025. Building on this success, we are working with industry to explore the creation of a similar program for tankers, to complement the commercial sealift capabilities of the MSP.

The Department also shares the view that cargo preference laws must be vigorously enforced. Additionally, the Department will look for opportunities to promote increased cargo shipments on U.S.-flag fleet vessels.

The Department also strongly supports U.S. coastwise trading laws, which are a key component of our national maritime policy. Keeping U.S.-flag, U.S.-owned, and U.S.-built vessels in waterborne domestic trade provides thousands of jobs for American citizens. Importantly, the wealth generated by these trades remains within the United States.

In that regard, we are fully committed to creating new opportunities for domestic waterborne services through our America's Marine Highway program. Expanding domestic waterborne routes will provide critical capacity, greater choice for shippers, and improve the efficiency of the overall transportation system. Expanding the utilization of our domestic waterways has the potential to generate orders for new vessels, new jobs for mariners, and for land-based workers at our Nation's ports.

Thank you again for your letter and for your support of our efforts. We appreciate our partnership with your organizations and look forward to continuing to work together with other Government agencies and the U.S. maritime community to achieve our common goals.

Similar letters were sent to Mr. Brown and Mr. Lundeberg. If I can provide further information or assistance, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,



John D. Porcari