

NAVY LEAGUE

OF THE UNITED STATES



May 21, 2018

Speaker Paul Ryan
H-232
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi
H-204
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of our 50,000 members, I write in support of the Energizing American Shipbuilding bill, which will strengthen the U.S.-flag Merchant Marine and American shipbuilding. The Navy League of the United States is a civilian nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to informing the American people that the United States of America is a maritime nation, and that its national and economic security are dependent upon strong sea services - U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard and U.S.-flag Merchant Marine.

By requiring increasing portions of our LNG and strategic energy reserve assets be shipped on U.S.-built and U.S.-flag vessels and providing training for Merchant Mariners, this bill will create thousands of mariner and shipyard manufacturing jobs. At a time when our pool of qualified merchant mariners is at a tipping point and shipyards need investment to build the Navy's 355-ship fleet, these investments, and their timing, are crucial.

The Department of Defense depends on the Merchant Marine for over 95% of our national defense sealift needs in times of war or national emergency. As General Darren McDew, commander of the U.S. Transportation Command, testified before Congress, "the merchant mariner force is the bedrock to how we move the force in our country. It makes the difference between us being the most powerful military in the world and us not being the most powerful military in the world. There are nations around the world that wish they had the power projection ability we have. The mariner force we have today is insufficient to go to war for an extended period of time." Maritime Administrator Rear Admiral Mark Buzby (USN, Ret.), has made it clear in his Congressional testimony that America's ability to conduct large scale sealift operations is significantly challenged right now due to a mariner shortage—and that is in a peacetime environment. We must be prepared for any challenge our nation may face.

U.S. shipyards are an important source of American jobs, industrial knowledge, and give America an unparalleled edge in shipbuilding quality and technology. U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard ships will all benefit from a reliable, knowledgeable shipbuilding workforce. A healthy workforce is necessary for innovation and quality.

A healthy U.S.-flag Merchant Marine and strong shipbuilding industry is integral to our national and economic security. his bill will ensure we can depend on the U.S.-flag Merchant Marine for years to come. The Navy League thanks you for your support of the U.S.-flag and U.S. shipbuilding industry during this important time.

Thank you,

Alan Kaplan
National President