

# TTD NEWS RELEASE

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## Obama Maritime Academy Investments Ensure Properly Trained Mariners

WASHINGTON, DC— *Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) President Edward Wytkind issues this statement in support of the announcement made today by the U.S. DOT's Maritime Administration to invest in Maritime Academies:*

“Today’s announcement from the Obama Administration that it will invest an additional \$2.3 million in America’s six state maritime academies is good news for the long-term viability of our maritime sector and for the men and women seeking the training and education to enter this profession.

“Maritime academies play an important role in ensuring a consistent supply of capable and well-trained merchant mariners, and the funds released today — in addition to \$3.3 million invested in these academies last May — will help these schools succeed in their critical mission.

“President Obama and his team at the Department of Transportation clearly understand the important role that maritime plays in our economy, our national security and the need to provide first-class worker training in this highly complex sector of our transportation system. If the United States Merchant Marine is going to thrive and compete globally, our training programs must be second to none.

“It is, therefore, disappointing that the Republican candidate for president has a different view. As governor of Massachusetts, Mitt Romney proposed closing his state’s maritime academy in 2003 noting that ‘we don’t have much of a Merchant Marine in Massachusetts.’ Never mind that the Massachusetts Maritime Academy (MMA) is the oldest continuously operating academy in the U.S. (established in 1891) with a long history of producing some of the finest mariners, engineers and future leaders in the U.S. Armed Forces. Of course, Romney was making that statement as 50 cargo vessels were carrying supplies to Kuwait and other Persian Gulf nations supporting U.S. missions overseas, many out of Boston Harbor on ships crewed by MMA grads.

“If we close our nation’s maritime academies, as Gov. Romney wanted to do in his state, the U.S. Merchant Marine will disappear, the vital role it plays in defense of our country will likewise be eliminated, and thousands of good-paying jobs will be sent to foreign vessels. This is a strange position for someone who wants to be Commander-in-Chief and claims job creation is a top priority.”

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Edward Wytkind, President / Larry I. Willis, Secretary-Treasurer



*The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, represents 32 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, motor carrier, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit us at [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org) or on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*