



A bold voice for transportation workers

May 5, 2022

Oppose Anti-U.S.-flag Shipping Resolutions

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), representing 37 affiliate unions across all modes of transportation, I urge you to oppose S. Con. Res. 37 and 38, led by Senators Coons and Ernst, that would eliminate Ship American "cargo preference" rules essential to our U.S. Merchant Marine and U.S.-flag shipping industry. These unnecessary resolutions would waive a requirement that 50% of U.S. food-aid exports must be shipped on U.S.-flagged ships, which waives Ship American rules worldwide.

These resolutions are unnecessary, as existing law currently allows for the waiver of Ship American preference if U.S.-flag vessels are not available at fair and reasonable rates. More importantly, cargo preference statutes and other U.S.-flag shipping requirements are essential to maintaining the U.S.-flag fleet. By requiring that government-financed cargoes move on U.S.-flag vessels, we can retain a pool of highly-trained, qualified, and loyal civilian mariners who stand ready to meet our military and humanitarian needs while simultaneously operating in the commercial-flag industry. The reduction of cargo would only further endanger the jobs of civilian merchant mariners creating the distinct possibility that there will not be enough mariners to meet military surge and sustainment requirements for future military conflicts. When foreign flag shipping companies are currently making record profits amidst global supply chain disruptions, now is not the time to weaken critical policies that would come at the expense of American businesses and working families.

Transportation labor urges you to oppose these unnecessary resolutions that would use the conflict in Ukraine to exploit American mariner Jobs. Instead, we should support policies that strengthen cargo preference laws, which support our national security, preparedness for humanitarian missions, and good middle-class jobs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Regan', written over a circular stamp or seal.

Greg Regan
President

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

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