



March 12, 2026

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

On behalf of the undersigned American maritime labor unions, we write to express our strong opposition to any administrative waivers granted under the Jones Act in response to rising energy price concerns.

As you know, Jones Act waivers are granted only in rare, exceptional circumstances, typically on national security grounds where U.S.-flag vessel capacity is unavailable. Should concerns exist regarding tanker capacity, Congress has already addressed this through the Tanker Security Program, which ensures the availability of U.S.-flag vessels crewed by American mariners to move critical energy supplies when needed. Domestic tanker rates remain stable under long-term charters, while international shipping markets are highly volatile, with foreign-flag tanker rates often exceeding Jones Act rates due to global instability, including disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz. Waiving the Jones Act would do nothing to reduce gasoline prices. In fact, the primary driver of gasoline prices is the cost of crude oil, not domestic shipping costs. Several studies have shown the impact of domestic shipping on nationwide fuel prices is negligible, and any marginal savings would be unlikely to reach consumers. A Jones Act waiver would instead create opportunities for foreign-flag operators that avoid paying U.S. taxes, rely heavily on low-wage labor, and operate under regulatory regimes that circumvent international labor and vessel safety standards in direct conflict of America's national security and economic interests.

At a time when the Administration is working to strengthen our nation's shipyards and expand the international U.S.-flag fleet under the recently unveiled Maritime Action Plan (MAP), a Jones Act waiver would undermine these core policy objectives. The Jones Act is foundational to maintaining a strong merchant marine, sustaining maritime employment, supporting shipbuilding capacity, and preserving the domestic industrial base essential to national security. Waiving this law when U.S. vessels are available would outsource American jobs and weaken the long-term resilience of the maritime industrial base. While we genuinely share the collective goal of lowering energy costs for consumers, such waivers would do little to achieve that outcome while harming American workers and domestic industrial capacity.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. We stand ready to work with you to identify meaningful solutions to rising energy prices that protect American workers and strengthen our maritime and industrial base.

Sincerely,

Willie Barrere, American Maritime Officers

Kelly Anderson, President, American Radio Association

Don Josberger, President, International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots

Anthony Poplawski, President, Marine Firemen's Union

Adam Vokac, President, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association

Matt Henning, President, Sailors' Union of the Pacific

Greg Regan, President, Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD)