

NAVY LEAGUE LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
ISSUE BRIEF: U.S. FLAG/MERCHANT MARINE
April 18, 2024



ASK: Expand Tanker Security Program funding to 20 vessels and increase the stipend per vessel
ASK: Defend the Jones Act
ASK: Fund MARAD Sealift program for design and construction of 10 new U.S.- built ships

Expand the Tanker Security Program and increase the stipend per vessel

The Tanker Security Program (TSP) is vital to America's ability to transport petroleum between its ports to support the domestic economy and to resupply forces afloat and ashore overseas in the event of a long-term military conflict in the Indo-Pacific. Under the TSP, the United States pays a \$6m annual stipend to operate a tanker under U.S.-flag and to agree to support American contingency operations in times of need. The program is authorized for 20 vessels but only funded for 10 and the \$6M stipend/ship needs to be increased to cover several years of inflation and periodic training of crews to conduct refueling operations at sea with Navy oilers. We ask that Congress provide the funding needed for 20 tankers and increase the annual stipend per the forthcoming Congressionally mandated TSP Report.

Defend the Jones Act

The Navy League strongly supports the Jones Act which ensures that ships transporting goods between American ports are American-built, American-owned, and American-crewed. This law is vital to American economic and national security, it provides hundreds of thousands of jobs, it is a vital lifeline to our domestic shipbuilding industrial base, and it prevents nations like Russia and China from traversing our vulnerable waterways. The Jones Act is essential to America's economic and national security and we ask that Congress defend it against efforts to weaken or undermine the law.

Fund MARAD Sealift program for design and construction of 10 new U.S.-built ships

We also ask that Congress fully fund a previously authorized program to allow the Maritime Administration to design and build new sealift ships to be constructed in the USA. This would be instead of allowing the Navy to recapitalize the Ready Reserve Force with used ships at a price that allows the sellers of the used ships to buy their replacements with new ones built in China, supporting the Chinese industrial base instead of ours!

America's economic and national security depend on its ability to conduct commerce and resupply operations utilizing its own vessels, as well as its capacity for shipbuilding and maintenance. In all of these respects, the Jones Act, the Tanker Security Program, and the 10 U.S.-built sealift vessels are essential to our nation and its future.