

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



Office of the General Vice President
Eastern Territory

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August 6, 2013

Mr. Robert Parsons
Public Involvement and Hearings Officer
Bureau of Highway Development
Michigan Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 30050
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Parsons,

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers represents over 600,000 members throughout the United States and Canada. I'm the General Vice President assigned to the Eastern Territory with a membership of over 100,000. The Eastern Territory has 12 District Lodges and 142 Local Lodges that cover 14 states, Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Vermont and the District of Columbia.

I received and reviewed a copy of the Michigan Freight Plan and was extremely surprised to learn Michigan believes the Jones Act hinders the creation of jobs by restricting the development of short sea shipping or other domestic shipping services. The Jones Act is found in Section 27 of the Merchant Marine Act of 1920. The Act requires that goods and passengers transported by water between U.S. ports be done in United States made ships, owned by United States citizens, and crewed by United States citizens.

The objective and purpose of the Merchant Marine Act of 1920 has stood the test of time for 93 years. The Act is necessary for our National Defense and for the proper growth of its foreign and domestic commerce. The United States shall have a merchant marine of the best equipped and most suitable types of vessels sufficient to carry the greater portion of its commerce and serve as a naval or military auxiliary in time of war or national emergency, ultimately to be owned and operated privately by citizens of the United States.

America works to secure its borders and must also secure its waterways. Homeland security is enhanced by the requirement for American vessels that operate in full accordance with U.S. laws and with the consistent oversight of the U.S. government. In that respect, the Jones Act is as effective as a homeland security measure as any

federal agency could ever write and enforce. You don't need to be an expert in the maritime industry to know that to repeal or modify any of the key domestic maritime laws would make America less secure economically and militarily. Repeal of those laws would provide little benefit while making America more vulnerable.

From the earliest days of European settlement, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River have been utilized as a means of transportation. Great Lakes cities were founded as trading posts along a vast marine highway that facilitated commerce in an era pre-dating railroad and highways. This relationship to water has enabled the region to thrive and today, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region is the industrial and agricultural heartland of both the United States and Canada.

The Eastern Territory set a goal to create jobs in the shipping and shipbuilding industry. We have helped to turn the corner and the industry is making a slow comeback. Maritime commerce on the Great Lakes Seaway system in 2010 generated 226,833 U.S. and Canadian jobs, including 92,923 direct jobs. Today, we need to prepare the next generation of workers to develop the skills required in the shipping industry.

We need to support the Jones act and by doing so, we support the security of our country, create jobs, and grow America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn D. Tucker, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lynn D. Tucker, Jr.
General Vice President

LDT/bl