

## HOW THE VPAF IS USED

Contributions to the American Maritime Officers Voluntary Political Action Fund are used expressly for direct contributions to the campaigns of elected representatives and candidates for office in the Senate and House of Representatives.

Contributions to the VPAF are held in an account separate from other union and plans funds. Nearly 100 percent of every dollar contributed to the VPAF is used for direct campaign contributions. The remaining portion pays for banking and auditing services to ensure the fund's compliance with federal regulations. No AMO officials, representatives or employees draw salaries from the AMO Voluntary Political Action Fund.

The legislative staff of American Maritime Officers determines to which candidates and representatives contributions will be made. Candidates are selected based upon their support for U.S.-flag issues, their ability to affect U.S. maritime policy and upon key leadership positions, not partisan issues or considerations. Legislative staff expenses (not including direct political contributions) are paid by American Maritime Officers.

## POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TRACKED ONLINE

Complete contribution disclosure reports for the AMO Voluntary Political Action Fund are available on the Federal Elections Commission's Web site at this address: <http://www.fec.gov/finance/disclosure/srssea.shtml>.

On the search page, select an election cycle and enter "American Maritime Officers" in the search field.

## OUR LEGISLATIVE STAFF

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*A contribution to the AMO Voluntary Political Action Fund is an investment in job and benefit security for all AMO members and their families and in the future of the U.S.-flag shipping industry.*



*The survival and prosperity of U.S.-flag shipping depend almost entirely upon political support from our elected representatives in Congress and the Executive Branch.*



Thwarting numerous attempts to open Jones Act trades to foreign-flagged vessels, annual approval of funding for U.S.-flag fleet programs, such as the Maritime Security Program, budgeting for cargo preference and the operating costs of military sealift vessels manned by contract civilians—these decisions rest in the hands of Congress and the President.

For decades, American Maritime Officers has been a leader in the effort to sustain and expand political support for U.S. shipping laws and programs, and to promote initiatives that encourage new private investment in U.S.-flag shipping. Through the AMO Voluntary Political Action Fund, our legislative staff selectively contributes to the campaigns of elected Representatives and Senators. These contributions allow our staff to establish supportive relationships with key lawmakers on behalf of AMO members and their families. These relationships provide our union with opportunities to promote the crucial roles of U.S.-flag shipping and civilian seafarers in



the commerce and defense of this nation; they also enhance AMO's work with legislative leaders on issues vital to the U.S. fleet and American merchant mariners.

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### LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The existing cornerstones of U.S. maritime policy our legislative staff works to promote and protect are:

- **U.S. Cabotage Laws:** The Jones Act, Passenger Vessel Services Act and the Towing and Dredging Act—these statutes reserve waterborne shipping between domestic ports and U.S. territories for vessels built in the U.S., manned by U.S. citizens and operated by U.S. companies. The cabotage laws govern domestic deep-sea, Great Lakes and inland waters shipping trades and maritime operations.

- **Maritime Security Program:** This program supports a fleet of 60 U.S.-flagged commercial vessels operating in international trades, including several manned in all licensed positions by AMO. In exchange for an annual allotment, the vessels are made available to the U.S. military for sealift operations in times of war and national crisis.

- **Cargo Preference Laws:** These laws reserve shares of U.S. government cargoes, including shipments of military equipment and humanitarian



food aid, for U.S.-flagged commercial vessels operated by American companies.

- **Title XI:** This program provides federal loan guarantees for private-sector financing of the construction of ships and maritime infrastructure components at American shipyards.

- **Dredging and Harbor Maintenance:** These operations regularly require authorization and funding from the federal government to maintain U.S. harbors and channels to project depths for commercial shipping.



*As our legislative staff works to secure support and funding for these laws and programs, they continue to engage with members of Congress in the development of initiatives to generate new employment opportunities for American mariners in the U.S. fleet. Their success depends upon your support of the AMO Voluntary Political Action Fund.*