

Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO



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April 7, 2022

The Honorable Rob Portman
United States Senate
448 Russell Senate Building
Washington D.C. 20002

Dear Senator Portman,

I am writing you today as both the President of the Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO, and a concerned citizen. Our nation faces distinct strategic disadvantages, two of which directly affect the state of Ohio and if continued to be left unaddressed, may regrettably portend a future of dire circumstances that is beginning to shake the foundations of America's economic and national security.

These disadvantages are now serious problems for our nation and a major component and key to solving these complications rest in the great Buckeye State of Ohio.

First and foremost, our nation has weakened American Jones Act shipbuilding over the past forty years and in so doing has failed to fully explore the potential of developing our coastal and inland waterways into a fully functional marine highway. The result has been lost jobs, manufacturing opportunities, and subjecting the nation to an unnecessary supply chain crises that promises to plague our nation for generations to come.

Accordingly, the failure to recognize the need to maintain a vibrant maritime economy has resulted in a debilitating and significant shortage of shipyards, shipbuilders and the invaluable resources that accompany a vibrant maritime nation. To compound this issue, these failures now have affected the ability of the United States Navy to navigate the heavy seas of many conflicting priorities in an ever changing and complicated world.

For the past two decades China has threatened to weaken the strong grasp of American naval superiority and in so doing, has created a power competition between two rival super powers, resulting in a strain upon the United States ability to properly maintain our high priority capital warships, submarines, that are consistently being sidelined due to the shortage of skilled trades and lack of Naval Shipyard capacity. Our failure to invest and place value in America's maritime future now threatens our national security as the de-emphasis put upon seafaring assets by government and private industry has severely impacted the economic welfare of American working families, but the nation's ability to maintain the world's greatest Navy.

We can best address these two strategic national emergencies by putting our collective best foot forward in Ohio. The Marine Highway provides America with its best opportunity to provide the badly needed third leg and lifeline to America's troubled supply chain. The nations ultimate success in combatting against the harmful economic and national security effects expressed will best be defined in Ohio, with the use of American made, flagged and operated barges, vessels and tugs, navigating the Great Lakes and rivers of Ohio delivering parts, supplies and submarines to the shorelines of Lorain.

BUILD THE AMERICAN NAVAL SHIPYARD / DEVELOP THE MARINE HIGHWAY

Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO

You are cordially invited to join with the organized workers of labor, neighborhood families, business and elected officials of Lorain, Ohio, as they join together en masse:

Date: Monday, May 2, 2022

Time: 10:00 am (EST)

Location: Black River Landing, Event Venue

Event speakers are invited to share their vision promoting a once in a lifetime opportunity to invest in the port infrastructure of the city of Lorain, Ohio. Such important and timely investment will rebuild the fabric of many Buckeye state communities through the creation of good paying jobs, the strengthening of the nations ravished supply chain and will best serve to enhance and protect the national security of our nation.

Attendees are respectfully requested to speak in support of the following:

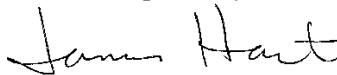
1. The Bartlett Maritime Plan and how its implementation will best assist the Navy in resolving the Submarine Maintenance Crisis.
2. Encourage and forge together a genuine relationship between private industry, government and labor, dedicated to incentivizing American shipbuilders, manufacturers and distributors who strive to maximize the nation's true maritime potential with increased use of the marine highway. It is long time past that America builds a cost efficient and environmentally friendly Jones Act fleet that utilizes our nations coastal and inland waterways to solve critical supply chain problems that cripple our country's ports, roads, rails and consumers.

Please confirm your support and participation in this event, no later than Monday, April 18, 2022, by email to Scott Levenson at ScottL@theadvancegroup.com

We look forward to your continued friendship, support and attendance at this job creation, community building and national security event!

With warmest regards, I remain

Respectfully,



James Hart
President

cc: President Tim Burga, Ohio, AFL-CIO
President Mike Knisley, Ohio State Building Trades Council
President Carl Neutzling, North Central Ohio, Building Trades Council
Business Manager John Youngberg, UA Local Union 42
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