

## Trump Administration Issues Maritime Action Plan



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The Trump Administration issued its [“America’s Maritime Action Plan”](#) on February 13, 2026. The MAP, as it is generally referred to, was called for by the President’s April 9, 2025, Executive Order titled “Restoring America’s Maritime Dominance.”

The MAP is a wide-ranging and ambitious plan covering all aspects of the U.S. merchant marine, including the operating fleet of U.S.-flag vessels, U.S. shipyards, the maritime industrial base in general, maritime workers, and federal and state maritime educational institutions. The MAP has a heavy emphasis on supporting and growing the U.S. shipyard industrial base. Many of the proposals in the MAP – such as “maritime prosperity zones” to spur shipyard investment – were previewed in the April 2025 executive order.

The MAP indicates that the many proposals outlined will be the subject of an upcoming legislative proposal, potentially submitted to the U.S. Congress in conjunction with the President’s annual budget submission. The MAP refers to this proposal as a “comprehensive blueprint.” The MAP notes that the SHIPS Act has already been introduced in Congress without indicating whether the MAP-spurred legislation will overlap with that proposal (although many items in the MAP are also in the SHIPS Act).

Most noteworthy for U.S.-flag vessel owners and potential investors in U.S.-flag vessels are the following MAP proposals –

- Create a “Maritime Security Trust Fund” to provide “dedicated, mandatory funding” for the various investments in the U.S. merchant marine called for in the MAP;
- Establish a “universal fee” to be paid by foreign-built vessels on all imported cargoes, potentially 1 cent per kilogram to generate roughly \$66 billion over ten years;
- Create a “Strategic Commercial Fleet” of privately owned U.S.-flag, U.S.-built vessels;
- Consider a “bridge strategy” where foreign-built vessels are granted U.S.-built privileges in exchange for investments committing to transition to all U.S.-built vessels;
- Institute commercial cargo preference on “high-volume exporting countries” as U.S.-built vessels are available;
- Increase the government cargo preference from 50 percent as U.S.-built vessels are available;

- Modify the three-year wait rule which provides that foreign-built vessels must wait three years before being eligible for certain government-reserved cargoes to permit foreign vessels immediate access; and
- “Leverage economic diplomacy” to secure commitments from other countries on shipping and shipbuilding.

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