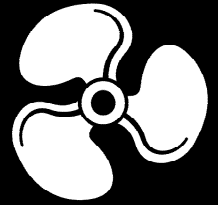


2026

IMPACT

Delivering on issues that matter most to you



Reinforcing Support for the Jones Act and Combatting Unnecessary Waivers

- Led the American Maritime Partnership in **comprehensive industry-wide advocacy campaign** with the Administration, Congress, and the media to **end the Jones Act waiver**.
- Spearheaded letter to the President signed by **52 Members of Congress** – including the House Speaker, Majority Leader, and 10 committee chairmen—**calling for an end to the Jones Act waiver**.
- Conducted continuous, **high-level engagement with White House officials**, including meetings with OMB Director and senior presidential aides.
- Maintained **high-level Congressional engagement and coordination on waiver response** with leadership of House and Senate Armed Services Committees, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, and House Intelligence Committee.
- Scrutinized MARAD reporting on waiver usage to identify and **publicize foreign vessels posing particular security risks** and directly displacing available U.S. vessels and mariners.
- Executed **multi-faceted End the Waiver public affairs campaign** in collaboration with the American Maritime Partnership, including:
 - Cable ads on Fox News, CNBC, and CNN and news coverage in Reuters, Bloomberg, and other national outlets.
 - **DC-focused video and digital ad campaign** targeting policymakers.
 - State-focused campaigns in Louisiana, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama, and Kentucky resulting in **over 1.5 million TV views, 900,000 radio listens, and 1 million social media views**.
 - **Social media campaign** highlighting waiver harms and the #WeAretheJonesAct series featuring mariner testimonials.
 - Jones Act primer for mariners to **help members engage employees** in anti-waiver advocacy.

Strengthening Relationships with Administration Leaders and Congress

- Elevated relationships with **Coast Guard Commandant, Vice Commandant, and senior leadership** by reinforcing staff contacts with strategic member engagement.
- Participated in Congressional Maritime Safety Roundtable, highlighting the importance of the Jones Act, consistent **Coast Guard funding, and oversight** to ensure regulations support safety while facilitating commerce.
- Built strong relationships with **key Administration officials, including the Maritime Administrator**.
- Strengthened connections with the Coast Guard's Prevention Policy directorate through its leadership transition by leveraging existing relationships with new leaders and ensuring **continued close communication and commitment to partnership**.

Improving the Efficiency and Responsiveness of Coast Guard Services

- Secured policy guidance that makes **AWO-supported process improvements for TSMS option vessel inspections**, including de-scoping COI inspections and streamlining random audit requirements.
- Advocated for a **modernized Streamlined Inspection Program** and expanded Tank Barge Streamlined Inspection Program that complements the TSMS option and saves operators time and money.
- Launched AWO Vessel Inspection Feedback Tracker to **generate data-driven examples** to drive process improvements.
- Established training program with Coast Guard units to **educate junior marine inspectors** about AWO members' commitment to safety.
- Worked with Coast Guard to maintain member **access to essential services** during record DHS shutdown, including proactive mariner credentialing extensions and communications.
- Joined industry partners in seeking long-term pathways to **maintain Coast Guard operations during future government shutdowns**.

Advocating for Risk-Informed Cybersecurity Regulations and Supporting Member Compliance

- Advanced a two-track strategy on cybersecurity regulation—advocating for a **practical, risk-based approach** while **developing ready-made compliance tools**.
- Built relationships with the Office of Maritime Cybersecurity Policy to shape **practical implementation and enforcement** and grew engagement with field units.
- Completed **industry-wide baseline cybersecurity assessment** for towing vessels and barges, built on a repeatable, risk-based methodology **members can apply to their own fleets**.
- Secured Coast Guard **commitment to a common-sense implementation approach** that gives operators flexibility to implement their cyber plans following the July 2027 plan submission deadline.
- Secured Coast Guard agreement in principle to **relieve low-risk barges of regulatory burdens** and developed a formal waiver request for barges.
- Initiated **development of cybersecurity annex to the AWO ASP** to streamline member compliance.

Reducing Regulatory and Compliance Burdens

- Secured publication of Coast Guard policy authorizing **reductions in engine room crewing** for qualifying ATBs with automation.
- Secured FDA proposal to reduce regulatory burden on testing laboratories that will **speed implementation of oral fluid drug testing**.
- Secured bill passage in the Illinois House to **exempt mariners from paid leave requirement**, setting up Senate action in veto or lame duck session.
- Enhanced information sharing between members and the Coast Guard on stowaway activity to **reduce operational impacts while supporting secure maritime borders**.
- Secured Coast Guard-NTSB policy change to **raise property damage threshold** for major marine casualties while rulemaking is pending.
- Secured seats on OCIMF groups to give members a **direct voice in SIRE, TMSA, and other programs** that shape operations, customer requirements, and contracts.
- Executed a new five-year agreement with American Chemistry Council to **streamline inspections for dual members and strengthen safety collaboration**.

Promoting Safe and Efficient Navigation

- Ensured the **Ohio River Restoration Program Act** was not included in House and Senate committee-passed WRDA bills.
- Through the Coalition to Protect the Missouri River, secured language in the House WRDA bill to **prevent diversion of water from the Missouri River Basin** that would jeopardize Missouri and Mississippi river navigation.
- Secured re-opening of Coast Guard's **Atlantic Coast Shipping Safety Fairways** proposal to ensure navigation safety concerns are fully considered.
- Established new working **relationships with railroad bridge operators**, including visit to a remote drawbridge operations center.
- Pressed for a targeted, detection-based framework for the **North Atlantic Right Whale Vessel Speed Rule** instead of blanket speed restrictions.
- Launched nationwide effort to improve safe interactions with recreational boaters through **innovative signage, educational resources, and local member engagement**.
- Built networks with low-carbon fuel and technology stakeholders to **explore new fuel, bunkering, and cargo opportunities** for members.

Raising Industry Visibility and Enhancing Connections

- Produced **1,785 media and public affairs appearances** on industry priorities in print and radio outlets including the **New York Times, Washington Post**, and state and local media.
- Engaged with Department of Energy National Labs, Transportation Research Board, and others to support **research initiatives** that enhance AWO advocacy.
- Engaged lawmakers in **HERO Award recognition events** to highlight recipients in their communities.
- Created the **AWO Navigation Safety Rate**, the industry's first consensus-based performance measure for comparing collision, allision, and grounding rates.
- Improved the **AWO mobile app** and increased usage by 114%.
- **Redesigned member portal** for easier use and implemented analytics to track member needs and use patterns.
- Redesigned regional roundtable meetings to **facilitate deeper discussion** among members and the Coast Guard.

"...AWO is committed to speaking with **one united voice for policies that keep our waterways strong and safe**: continued bipartisan support for the Jones Act and ending the current waiver; Coast Guard policies that encourage, and do not hinder, safety, efficiency and innovation; robust investment in waterways infrastructure; and state policies that enable safe navigation and our industry's continued economic impact across the nation."

Matt Woodruff
Kirby Corporation
AWO Chairman of the Board

