

Dear Sir

Congress and state representatives talk about jobs. The Merchant Marine has always provided advancement opportunities if you were willing to work hard. This is known as coming up through the hawsepipe.

Unless you attended the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy or one of the six state maritime academies you climbed "up the hawsepipe" to reach your present position in the industry. My first hand experience with employers is the hawsepiper's is preferred to academy graduates. A graduate has license and education but lacks the experience like docking a ship, oil barge or repairing a main engine in an emergency.

The USCG (National Maritime Center) has been working for years to eliminate the hawsepipe. Congress in passing H.R. 4188: Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015, has caused harm to seaman to advance.

Sec. 7510. Examinations for merchant mariner credentials

(a) Disclosure not required Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary is not required to disclose to the public—

- (1) a question from any examination for a merchant mariner credential;
- (2) the answer to such a question, including any correct or incorrect answer that may be presented with such question; and
- (3) any quality or characteristic of such a question, including—
 - (A) the manner in which such question has been, is, or may be selected for an examination;
 - (B) the frequency of such selection; and
 - (C) the frequency that an examinee correctly or incorrectly answered such question.

Questions and illustrations were made public in 1988 in response to a request and appeal by Marine Education Text-Books. On July 12, 2010 the US Coast Guard again removed exam questions from the public access. The National Mariners Association appealed that decision to Coast Guard headquarters. In August 2012, Commandant Adm. Robert Papp's office granted the appeal and the questions again were public domain.

It many it may seam the questions and associated material provide an easy way to pass exam by studying questions. The NMC has over 17,000 questions for the deck licenses alone. The questions provide oversight and understand subject mater. As the NMC is not forth coming in what knowledge expected for license subjects. The CFR's provide subjects by license but the NMC does not follow their own rules. I know from experience exams contain subjects not required in the CFR's. The NMC is out of control and in need of oversight. Questions and associated material should be available under the Freedom of Information Act.

Congress has approved a Coast Guard budget of \$6,981,036,000 for fiscal year 2016. This should be used for a better purpose than restricting job opportunities.

Thank you,