

## Headlines:

DOJ – cocaine smugglers sentenced;  
DOJ – man pleads guilty to accepting \$2.5 million;  
MARAD - \$4.8 million in Marine Highway grants;  
Senate – bill introduced re waterfront communities;  
Senate – bill introduced re ports and intermodal connections;  
House – bill introduced re oil spills;  
GAO – sustaining the US-flag fleet; and  
New Zealand – vessel lost due to crew fatigue.

August 9, 2018



# Bryant's Maritime News

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## **DOJ – cocaine smugglers sentenced**



The Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a **news release** stating that five crew members of a low-profile vessel smuggling 1,205 pounds of cocaine have been sentenced to prison, with the captain of the vessel receiving 210 months in jail. The capture by the US Coast Guard involved the use of disabling fire from a Coast Guard helicopter as the captain tried to flee on a go-fast boat. (7/19/18) [<https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdca/pr/five-crew-members-sentenced-smuggling-1205-pounds-cocaine-high-seas-captain-low-profile>].

## DOJ – man pleads guilty to accepting \$2.5 million



The Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a **news release** stating that a man pleaded guilty to soliciting and accepting \$2,536,119.19 in bribes and kickbacks associated with federal energy savings performance contracts. The contracts included a US Coast Guard project in Puerto Rico and a US Navy project in California. (8/6/18) [<https://www.justice.gov/usao-vt/pr/florida-man-pleads-guilty-accepting-25-million-bribes-and-kickbacks-o>].

## MARAD – \$4.8 million in Marine Highway grants



The Maritime Administration (MARAD) issued a **news release** stating that \$4.8 million has been awarded in grants to six Marine Highway projects. (8/8/18) [[https://www.marad.dot.gov/newsroom/news\\_release/2018/maritime-administration-awards-4-8-million-in-grants-for-marine-highway-projects-throughout-the-u-s/](https://www.marad.dot.gov/newsroom/news_release/2018/maritime-administration-awards-4-8-million-in-grants-for-marine-highway-projects-throughout-the-u-s/)].

## Senate – bill introduced re waterfront communities



Senator Baldwin (D-WI) introduced the **Waterfront Community Revitalization and Resiliency Act of 2018** (S. 3265) to require the Secretary of Commerce to undertake certain activities to support waterfront community revitalization and resiliency, and for other purposes. (7/25/18) [<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-115s3265is/pdf/BILLS-115s3265is.pdf>].

## Senate – bill introduced re ports and intermodal connections



Senator Wicker (R-MS) introduced the **Port Operations, Research, and Technology Act** (S. 3273) to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of goods through ports and intermodal connections to ports, and for other purposes. (7/25/18) [<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-115s3273is/pdf/BILLS-115s3273is.pdf>].

## House – bill introduced re oil spills



Representative Engel (D-NY) introduced a bill (H.R. 6658) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny certain tax benefits to persons responsible for the discharge of oil or other hazardous substances into navigable waters of the United States. Official text of the bill is not yet available. (8/7/18).

## GAO – sustaining the US-flag fleet



The Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report on sustaining the US-flag fleet. The report notes that in a crisis, the government relies on oceangoing US-flag ships and US-citizen crews to help the military. To ensure their availability, the government provides stipends and requires certain government cargoes to be shipped on US-flag ships. Despite these efforts, there are challenges. In recent years, US-flag ships have become more expensive to run and the government has shipped less cargo—making it harder for carriers to stay in business. In addition, there may not be enough US-citizen sailors to meet defense needs. The report recommends that the Department of Transportation (DOT) complete its development of a US maritime strategy. [GAO-18-478](#) (8/8/18) [<https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/693802.pdf>].

## New Zealand – vessel lost due to crew fatigue



Maritime New Zealand issued a [media release](#) stating that the owner of a commercial fishing vessel was fined \$27,200 after being convicted of dangerous maritime activity following the loss of the vessel due to excessive crew fatigue. (8/7/18)[ <https://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/public/news/media-releases-2018/20180808a.asp>].

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