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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
DEFENSE  
HOMELAND SECURITY

June 3, 2026

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Chair  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Jones Act Reform; Unique and Crippling Effects on Noncontiguous Parts of Country Including Hawai'i

Dear Chair Graves and Ranking Member Larsen:

I write in full support of the attached April 23, 2026 letter to the Committee from key industries urging reforms to the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, commonly known as the Jones Act. I strongly support a constructive, full and long-overdue review of whether and how this 106-year-old law should be amended, modernized, revised or otherwise restructured to better reflect present-day economic and national security realities.

I especially urge particular consideration of the unique, disproportionate negative effects of the Jones Act on our nation's noncontiguous jurisdictions, including Hawai'i. Unlike the contiguous United States, our jurisdictions lack access to alternative transportation networks such as interstate trucking or rail or short-haul air cargo. For Hawai'i, ocean shipping is not just one option among many; it is the sole practical lifeline for nearly all of our essential goods, including food, medicine, fuel, construction materials and consumer goods. And so how the Jones Act actually applies to Hawai'i is of critical importance to our supply chains, costs of living, export options and many other factors of economic and social wellbeing.

In Hawai'i, where more than ninety percent of our essential goods arrive by sea, the practical effect of the Jones Act has been the creation of a highly concentrated and structurally constrained domestic shipping market. With artificially limited vessel availability and no international competition on domestic routes, transportation costs and options for both import and export cargo remain persistently elevated. These costs are embedded throughout the economy and ultimately borne by consumers.

For the average Hawai'i family, the Jones Act is estimated to add approximately \$1,794 annually to household expenses. While some argue that figure is modest, the reality is that it represents a substantial and recurring burden on households already facing some of the highest costs of living in the

nation. That amount could otherwise support essential needs such as healthcare, education and housing.

These cost increases cascade across our economy, including an estimated additional \$389 annually in housing costs, \$200 in vehicle-related expenses and \$147 in food costs per household. These are not abstract economic effects; they are direct impacts on daily affordability and quality of life that arise from federally-created and maintained monopolies that have no practical justification for their negative results.

The constraints are especially stark in energy transportation. Of the nearly 7,500 oil tankers operating worldwide, only 54 are Jones Act-compliant and eligible to move fossil fuel products between the continental United States and Hawai'i. Given Hawaii's heavy dependence on imported fuel for electricity generation, transportation and daily life, this limited capacity forces the state to rely heavily on foreign sourcing for energy inputs wherever possible, simply because international shipping is significantly less expensive and more competitive. That is an unacceptable result for key parts of our oil-exporting country.

For these reasons, I have introduced several bipartisan measures intended to relieve the specific and manifestly unfair burdens borne by noncontiguous jurisdictions. Our H.R. 665, the Noncontiguous Shipping Competition Act, would authorize additional competitive access to shipping routes serving noncontiguous areas in order to reduce monopolistic or duopolistic market conditions. H.R. 666, the Noncontiguous Shipping Reasonable Rate Act, would establish a benchmark standard for reasonable shipping rates tied to analogous international market pricing. H.R. 667, the Noncontiguous Shipping Relief Act, would exempt noncontiguous jurisdictions from Jones Act restrictions. We have also introduced other similar measures that propose various Jones Act reforms.

I urge this Committee to reject the entreaties of the Jones Act lobby to avoid any constructive review of this law and instead engage in real oversight and consideration of modern-day realities. That our current maritime policies overall are not meeting our transportation, national security and other needs, and that their effects are borne uniquely and disproportionately by our noncontiguous jurisdictions, cannot be seriously disputed. Bipartisan reforms that update this antiquated law to preserve legitimate national interests while relieving unnecessary burdens on American families, consumers and businesses are fully available.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you on this critical issue.

With aloha,



Ed Case  
Member of Congress

