

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4839

To allow the Secretary of Transportation to authorize vessels documented in allied foreign countries, owned by nationals of allied foreign countries, or crewed by allied foreign countries to engage in certain coastwise trade, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 1, 2025

Mr. CASE (for himself and Mr. MOYLAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To allow the Secretary of Transportation to authorize vessels documented in allied foreign countries, owned by nationals of allied foreign countries, or crewed by allied foreign countries to engage in certain coastwise trade, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Merchant Marine Al-
5 lies Partnership Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PARTICIPATION IN COASTWISE TRADE OF CITIZENS**
2 **AND VESSELS OF ALLIED FOREIGN COUN-**
3 **TRIES.**

4 (a) ENDORSEMENT ELIGIBILITY FOR VESSELS
5 BUILT IN FOREIGN ALLIED COUNTRIES.—Section
6 12112(a)(2)(B) of title 46, United States Code, is amend-
7 ed—

8 (1) in clause (ii) by striking “; or” and insert-
9 ing a semicolon;

10 (2) in clause (iii) by striking “; and” and in-
11 serting “; or”; and

12 (3) by adding at the end the following new
13 clause:

14 “(iv) was built in a country listed on the
15 Foreign Ally Shipping Registry under section
16 55124(d) as of the date of issuance of the
17 coastwise endorsement; and”.

18 (b) LOSS OF COASTWISE TRADE PRIVILEGES.—Sec-
19 tion 12132 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

20 (1) in subsection (b) by striking “outside the
21 United States” and inserting “in a country other
22 than the United States that is not listed on the For-
23 eign Ally Shipping Registry under section
24 55124(d)”;

25 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
26 section:

1 “(c) BUILT OR REBUILT IN COUNTRY REMOVED
 2 FROM FOREIGN ALLY SHIPPING REGISTRY.—Except as
 3 otherwise provided in law, a vessel built or rebuilt in a
 4 country other than the United States that is eligible to
 5 engage in coastwise trade may not engage in coastwise
 6 trade for any period during which such country is not list-
 7 ed on the Foreign Ally Shipping Registry, beginning on
 8 the effective date of the removal of such country from the
 9 Registry.”.

10 (c) TREATMENT OF FOREIGN ALLIED COUNTRIES.—
 11 Chapter 551 of title 46, United States Code, is amended
 12 by adding at the end the following new section:

13 **“§ 55124. Transportation of merchandise by vessels,**
 14 **owners, and crews of foreign allied na-**
 15 **tions.**

16 “(a) QUALIFIED VESSEL DESCRIBED.—For purposes
 17 of this section, a qualified vessel is a vessel—

18 “(1) wholly owned for purposes of engaging in
 19 coastwise trade by—

20 “(A) one or more nationals of a country
 21 listed on the Foreign Ally Shipping Registry;

22 “(B) the government of a country listed on
 23 the Foreign Ally Shipping Registry; or

1 “(C) a combination of the entities de-
2 scribed in clauses (i) or (ii) and a national of
3 the United States; and

4 “(2) flagged in the United States or a country
5 listed on the Foreign Ally Shipping Registry.

6 “(b) AUTHORIZATION TO ENGAGE IN CERTAIN
7 TRADE.—

8 “(1) AUTHORIZATION.—Notwithstanding any
9 other provision of law, the Secretary of Transpor-
10 tation may authorize, for a period not to exceed 5
11 years, a qualified vessel to transport merchandise by
12 water, or by land and water, between points in the
13 United States to which the coastwise laws apply, ei-
14 ther directly or via a foreign port.

15 “(2) RENEWAL.—The Secretary may renew an
16 authorization under paragraph (1) for subsequent
17 periods not to exceed 5 years each.

18 “(3) REVOCATION.—If, at any time during the
19 period that an authorization issued under this sub-
20 section applies, the vessel subject to such authoriza-
21 tion ceases to be a qualified vessel under this sec-
22 tion, the Secretary shall revoke the authorization—

23 “(A) except as provided in subparagraph
24 (B), not later than 30 days after the date on

1 which such vessel ceases to be a qualified vessel;
2 or

3 “(B) with respect to a vessel that ceases to
4 be a qualified vessel due to the removal of a
5 country from the Foreign Ally Shipping Reg-
6 istry pursuant to subsection (d)(2), on the ef-
7 fective date of such removal.

8 “(4) NOTICE OF CHANGE IN INFORMATION.—

9 The owner of a vessel subject to an authorization
10 under this subsection shall notify the Secretary of
11 each change in information on which the authoriza-
12 tion is based (including information indicative of if
13 the vessel is a qualified vessel) not later than 30
14 days after such change.

15 “(c) NON-APPLICABILITY OF CREWING REQUIRE-
16 MENTS.—The Secretary of the department in which the
17 Coast Guard is operating may not enforce citizenship re-
18 quirements under section 8103 of title 46, United States
19 Code, or the credentialing requirements under section
20 8701 of title 46, United States Code, with respect to an
21 individual who is—

22 “(1) a national of the United States or a coun-
23 try listed on the Foreign Ally Shipping Registry; and

1 “(2) employed on a qualified vessel engaged in
2 trade pursuant to an authorization under subsection
3 (b).

4 “(d) FOREIGN ALLIED COUNTRY REGISTRY.—

5 “(1) REGISTRY.—For purposes of authorizing
6 transportation of merchandise by a vessel under sub-
7 section (b), the Secretary of State, in consultation
8 with the Commandant of the Coast Guard, shall
9 maintain a registry to be known as the ‘Foreign Ally
10 Shipping Registry’ that contains a list of each coun-
11 try determined by the Secretary to be an ally of the
12 United States for purposes of carrying out coastwise
13 trade under this section.

14 “(2) REMOVAL PROCEDURES.—

15 “(A) DETERMINATION.—The Secretary, in
16 consultation with the Commandant, may re-
17 move from the Foreign Ally Shipping Registry
18 any country determined by the Secretary to no
19 longer be an ally for purposes of carrying out
20 coastwise trade under this section.

21 “(B) CONGRESSIONAL NOTICE.—As soon
22 as is practicable within the 30-day period begin-
23 ning on the date on which the Secretary deter-
24 mines that a country is no longer an ally under
25 subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall submit to

1 the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Trans-
2 portation and Infrastructure of the House of
3 Representatives and the Committees on Foreign
4 Relations and Commerce, Science, and Trans-
5 portation of the Senate a notice of such deter-
6 mination.

7 “(C) EFFECTIVE DATE OF REMOVAL.—Re-
8 moval of a country from the Foreign Ally Ship-
9 ping Registry under subparagraph (A) shall
10 take effect on the date that is 30 days after the
11 date on which the Secretary submits a notice
12 under subparagraph (B) with respect to the
13 country.

14 “(D) IMMEDIATELY REMOVAL RESULTING
15 FROM DECLARATION OF WAR.—Effective imme-
16 diately upon a declaration of war by Congress
17 on any country on the Foreign Ally Shipping
18 Registry—

19 “(i) such country is removed from the
20 Registry; and

21 “(ii) the Secretary may not add such
22 country to the Registry during the period
23 of such war.

24 “(3) TREATMENT OF NATO MEMBER COUN-
25 TRIES.—The Foreign Ally Shipping Registry shall

1 include each member country of the North Atlantic
 2 Treaty Organization, unless and until the date on
 3 which such country—

4 “(A) is no longer a member country of the
 5 North Atlantic Treaty Organization; or

6 “(B) is otherwise removed from the For-
 7 eign Ally Shipping Registry pursuant to para-
 8 graph (2).”.

9 (d) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chap-
 10 ter 551 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by
 11 adding after the item relating to section 55123 the fol-
 12 lowing:

“55124. Exception for transportation of merchandise by vessels, owners, and
 crews of foreign allied nations.”.

13 **SEC. 3. EXEMPTION FROM DUTY ON REPAIRS OF DOCU-**
 14 **MENTED VESSELS IN ALLIED FOREIGN COUN-**
 15 **TRIES.**

16 Section 466(h) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C.
 17 1466(h)) is amended—

18 (1) in paragraph (3), by striking “or” at the
 19 end;

20 (2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at
 21 the end and inserting “; or”; and

22 (3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the fol-
 23 lowing:

1 “(5) the cost of repairs made in a shipyard lo-
2 cated in a country listed on the Foreign Ally Ship-
3 ping Registry pursuant to section 55124(d) of title
4 46, United States Code, with respect to documented
5 vessels (as such term is defined in section 106 of
6 such title).”.

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