MISSION FOR AMERICA · CHAPTER 09 · AT A GLANCE

The National Mission for Clean Shipping

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The global fleet of roughly 112,500 commercial ships burns close to 300 million tonnes of fuel oil a year and emits nearly 3 percent of the world's CO_2, about as much as all of Japan. The same fuel fills port neighborhoods with sulfur, nitrogen oxides, and soot, and an estimated 31 million Americans live within about five kilometers of a major port. Ships last 20 to 30 years, so most of today's fleet will have to be converted to cleaner fuels to meet tightening emissions rules. The world's retrofit capacity sits mostly in Chinese and Middle Eastern yards and falls far short of the more than 1,000 conversions a year the industry will need. The United States has almost no part in this market. In 2023 China delivered 972 commercial ships and the United States delivered seven. The Mission for Clean Shipping will rebuild American shipyards around converting the world's fleet, supply the clean fuel those ships need, and clear the air over the country's ports.

This mission will:

- Build the world's leading ship retrofit industry in American yards, starting with methanol conversions that take 80 to 90 days of yard time and adding ammonia as the engines mature, with guaranteed orders from the federal fleet and a Jones Act requirement that all new domestic vessels meet zero-emission fuel standards five years after the law passes.
- Produce green ammonia and green methanol at Gulf Coast ports and build fueling infrastructure at every major American port, with a price guarantee that keeps clean fuel close to the cost of today's bunker fuel for shipowners.
- Electrify all 50 major U.S. ports within a decade, with shore power at every dock so ships can shut off their engines, electric cranes and cargo equipment, the grid upgrades to power them, and public air-quality monitoring in every port community.
- Put battery-electric power on ferries, harbor craft, and short-sea routes, and help fishing fleets switch to cleaner boats.
- Work with allies at the International Maritime Organization to adopt and strengthen a global carbon price on shipping fuel, and build a network of clean refueling ports along the world's major trade routes.

The Reconstruction Finance Corporation will finance the rebuild with 30-year loans for shipyard retooling, advance purchase commitments that guarantee conversion orders before yards invest, financing for clean fuel plants, and coordinated grid upgrades at the ports. Retrofit work will train the welders, marine engineers, and electricians who will go on to build new clean ships from the keel up.

By the end of the decade, American yards will convert hundreds of ships a year for owners around the world, every major U.S. port will run on electricity, and more than 200,000 Americans will work in high-wage jobs across the yards, the fuel plants, and the modernized ports.