

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2429

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to develop and implement a comprehensive Campus Modernization Plan for the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 27, 2025

Mr. GARBARINO (for himself, Ms. GILLEN, Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia, Mr. SUOZZI, and Mr. LALOTA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to develop and implement a comprehensive Campus Modernization Plan for the United States Merchant Marine Academy, 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. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR**
4 **UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACAD-**
5 **EMY INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES**
6 **MODERNIZATION.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The United States Merchant Marine Acad-
2 emy plays a critical role in training service-obligated
3 licensed merchant mariners to operate commercial
4 vessels, in peacetime and during times of conflict.

5 (2) The United States Merchant Marine Acad-
6 emy is 1 of the 5 Federal service academies and
7 plays a critical role in maintaining a domestic, com-
8 mercial maritime industry, with each graduate hav-
9 ing a commitment to serve not less than 8 years in
10 the foreign and domestic commerce and the national
11 defense of the United States, which may include
12 service on a merchant vessel documented under
13 chapter 121 of title 46, and graduates make up
14 more than 80 percent of the United States Navy's
15 Strategic Sealift Officer Program.

16 (3) The United States defense readiness relies
17 on a strong investment in educating and training
18 militarily obligated United States Merchant Marine
19 officers at the United States Merchant Marine Acad-
20 emy.

21 (4) Most of the facilities at the United States
22 Merchant Marine Academy date back to the Acad-
23 emy's founding, have not been modernized since, and
24 are not conducive to the immersive training and de-

1 manding coursework today's Midshipmen are re-
2 quired to complete.

3 (5) Rehabilitating and modernizing the campus
4 infrastructure at the United States Merchant Ma-
5 rine Academy is necessary to ensuring current and
6 future generations of Midshipmen receive a first-
7 class education.

8 (b) SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—
9 It is the sense of the House of Representatives—

10 (1) to ensure that the United States continues
11 to have a sufficient number of service-obligated li-
12 censed merchant mariners to meet current and fu-
13 ture national security needs, the Maritime Adminis-
14 tration and the Department of Transportation have
15 a responsibility to provide suitable academic, train-
16 ing, and dormitory facilities at the United States
17 Merchant Marine Academy by rapidly implementing
18 a comprehensive plan for campus-wide moderniza-
19 tion in accordance with section 51329 of title 46,
20 United States Code, (referred to in this section as
21 the “Campus Modernization Plan”) and providing
22 sufficient accountability and oversight to ensure that
23 milestones in such plan are met;

24 (2) in developing the comprehensive Campus
25 Modernization Plan for the United States Merchant

1 Marine Academy, the Maritime Administration, and
2 the Department of Transportation should utilize, to
3 the maximum extent practicable, the “Merchant Ma-
4 rine Academy Full Speed Ahead Plan” developed by
5 the Maritime Security Infrastructure Council as
6 summarized in the Congressional Record, dated Feb-
7 ruary 28, 2024;

8 (3) given the conditions of the United States
9 Merchant Marine Academy as of the date of enact-
10 ment of this section, a comprehensive, campus-wide
11 modernization is needed to significantly upgrade or
12 replace facilities throughout the campus; and

13 (4) the Maritime Administration and the De-
14 partment of Transportation should identify opportu-
15 nities to utilize design-build contracts to increase de-
16 livery times and reduce costs.

17 (c) CAMPUS MODERNIZATION PLAN.—Chapter 513
18 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at
19 the end the following:

20 **“§ 51329. 10-year campus modernization plan**

21 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after
22 the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall
23 develop and begin to implement a comprehensive Campus
24 Modernization Plan (referred to in this section as the
25 ‘Campus Modernization Plan’), informed by the ‘United

1 States Merchant Marine Academy Full Speed Ahead Plan’
2 developed by the Maritime Security Infrastructure Council
3 as summarized in the Congressional Record, dated Feb-
4 ruary 28, 2024, to carry out a campus-wide modernization
5 at the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

6 “(b) OBJECTIVES.—In carrying out the Campus
7 Modernization Plan, the Administrator shall prioritize the
8 following objectives:

9 “(1) Promoting modern education best prac-
10 tices by constructing learning facilities that leverage
11 state-of-the art technologies and learning best prac-
12 tices.

13 “(2) Providing Midshipmen with access to fa-
14 cilities needed to pass the United States Coast
15 Guard License Exam for Third Mate or Third As-
16 sistant Engineer Unlimited.

17 “(3) Ensuring Midshipmen have access to fa-
18 cilities sufficient to enable Midshipmen to maintain
19 physical readiness standards required of United
20 States Navy officers.

21 “(4) Developing campus infrastructure to en-
22 sure the Academy attracts a diverse pool of appli-
23 cants.

24 “(5) Providing facilities that enable industry
25 engagement and continuing education opportunities.

1 “(6) Maintaining a safe and secure campus en-
2 vironment for all Midshipmen, which shall include
3 any facilities or infrastructure needed to meet the
4 requirements of sections 51326, 51327, or 51328.

5 “(7) Implementing, to the extent practicable,
6 the facilities and infrastructure recommendations in
7 chapter 4 of the report titled ‘Organizational Assess-
8 ment of the United States Merchant Marine Acad-
9 emy: A Path Forward’ issued by the National Acad-
10 emy of Public Administration in November 2021.

11 “(c) INCLUSIONS.—In meeting the objectives de-
12 scribed in subsection (b), the Campus Modernization Plan
13 shall include—

14 “(1) construction of new facilities or significant
15 renovation of existing facilities to provide—

16 “(A) Standards of Training, Certification,
17 and Watchkeeping applications laboratories;

18 “(B) a Safety Of Life At Sea training
19 pool;

20 “(C) engineering powerplant laboratories;

21 “(D) athletic facilities that meet the needs
22 of both male and female students;

23 “(E) enhanced waterfront facilities, to in-
24 clude a new pier;

1 “(F) a visitor welcome center and main
2 campus security office building;

3 “(G) housing facilities for senior staff and
4 faculty; and

5 “(H) sufficient parking facilities for fac-
6 ulty, staff, and campus visitors;

7 “(2) upgrades to all classrooms and laboratories
8 with modern information technology infrastructure;

9 “(3) a campus-wide upgrade and retrofit of—

10 “(A) the electric distribution power grid;

11 “(B) the sanitary sewer system piping;

12 “(C) the storm drainage system; and

13 “(D) the drinking water system, including
14 development of a separate and redundant fire
15 suppression system; and

16 “(4) renovations of existing campus facilities to
17 ensure all campus facilities—

18 “(A) are structurally sound;

19 “(B) have reliable heating and air condi-
20 tioning systems;

21 “(C) have functioning plumbing and elec-
22 trical systems;

23 “(D) are protected from the elements, in-
24 cluding through roof replacements and window
25 repairs or replacements, as needed;

1 “(E) are accessible in accordance with the
2 Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and

3 “(F) have working fire alarm and fire sup-
4 pression systems.

5 “(d) REQUIREMENTS.—For the duration of the Cam-
6 pus Modernization Plan, the Administrator shall ensure
7 that the Academy remains fully operational.

8 “(e) USE OF A FEDERAL CONSTRUCTION AGENT.—
9 Consistent with the requirements of section 3515(d)(3) of
10 the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act
11 for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–263), the Adminis-
12 trator shall seek to enter into an agreement with a Federal
13 construction agent to carry out the Campus Modernization
14 Plan authorized under subsection (a).

15 “(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
16 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of
17 Transportation, out of the Maritime Security Trust Fund
18 established under section 9512 of the Internal Revenue
19 Code of 1986, for fiscal years 2026 through 2035, for the
20 phased rehabilitation, modernization, and construction of
21 facilities and infrastructure at the United States Merchant
22 Marine Academy, in accordance with this section, includ-
23 ing the Campus Modernization Plan authorized in sub-
24 section (a), \$1,020,000,000 of which—

1 “(1) \$54,000,000 is authorized to be appro-
2 priated for fiscal year 2026 for design and planning
3 purposes, which shall be used for the development of
4 a design-build plan for the phased rehabilitation,
5 modernization, and construction of facilities and in-
6 frastructure at the United States Merchant Marine
7 Academy in accordance with the Campus Moderniza-
8 tion Plan; and

9 “(2) for fiscal years 2026 through 2035,
10 \$107,333,333 is authorized to be appropriated for
11 each fiscal year for construction and contingency
12 purchases necessary to execute the Campus Mod-
13 ernization Plan.”.

14 (d) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chap-
15 ter 513 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by
16 adding at the end the following:

“51329. 10-Year Campus Modernization Plan.”.

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