

# Trump administration unveils US maritime revitalization 'action plan'



*A “universal infrastructure or security fee” would be imposed on all foreign-built commercial vessels calling US ports under a plan unveiled Friday by the Trump administration. Photo credit: Darryl Brooks / Shutterstock.com.*

[Kevin Saville, Managing Editor, Online](#) | Feb 13, 2026, 4:31 PM EST

The Trump administration Friday unveiled a wide-ranging blueprint for revitalizing the US maritime sector, the financial cornerstone of which would be a Maritime Security Trust Fund (MSTF) that would be fed in large part by taxing foreign-owned vessels calling US ports.

“America’s Maritime Action Plan” includes a “universal infrastructure or security fee” that would be imposed on all foreign-built commercial vessels. The fee would be assessed based on the weight of the imported tonnage carried on the vessel. The action plan also includes a separate fee on imports arriving via land.

While no specific figures were proposed, the plan to tax cargo tonnage imported by foreign-built ships did offer two scenarios: A fee of 1 cent per kilogram would generate about \$66 billion over 10 years, while a fee of 25 cents per kg would yield close to \$1.5 trillion. It's unclear how the estimates were calculated.

“As foreign-built vessels benefit from US market access, this policy ensures they contribute to the long-term revitalization of America’s maritime capabilities,” the plan said.

The proposal echoes the tit-for-tat tariffs the US and China intended to impose on each other’s tonnage until a one-year suspension was enacted last November as part of a broader trade deal between Washington and Beijing.

The action plan also includes proposals to rebuild domestic shipbuilding capacity, strengthen the maritime industrial base, increase the fleet of US-built and -flagged commercial vessels working international trades, and eliminate “burdensome regulations” through a series of deregulatory measures.

“For decades, the nation’s strategic position and shipbuilding industrial capacity have weakened due to a lack of strategic focus, cumbersome government procurement processes and a lack of strategic support for construction of commercial vessels in domestic shipyards,” the plan’s introduction stated.

The action plan is an extension of an executive order issued by President Donald Trump last April calling for the restoration of American maritime dominance. The 40-page plan offers several concrete proposals, including the creation of the MSTF that would be fed by new revenue streams.

“By securing stable, long-term funding, the MSTF would ensure consistent support for investments in shipbuilding, fleet expansion, industrial base resilience, and maritime workforce development,” the plan said. “Authorized expenditures would include programs identified as helpful for the promotion, growth and strengthening of the domestic maritime sector.”

The MSTF would help fund the revitalization of US shipbuilding capacity, which is “the cornerstone of the administration’s strategy to restore America’s maritime strength and self-sufficiency,” according to the plan, which noted only eight shipyards exist in the country that can build vessels greater than 400 feet in length.

The plan calls for investment that would fund upgrades to commercial shipyards in order to add and modernize drydocks, heavy-lift and gantry cranes, panel lines, and

automated handling systems “to support higher-rate production and large hull handling.”

## Land port tax

A separate proposed funding mechanism, the Land Port Maintenance Tax, would be an equivalent to the existing Harbor Maintenance Tax for marine ports. The plan proposes a “modest tax” on merchandise entering the US via land of 0.125% of the value of the goods.

“Funds collected under this tax will be deposited into the newly established Land Port Maintenance Trust Fund (LPMTF), which will support the planning, design, construction, maintenance and improvement of land port infrastructure,” according to the plan.

The action plan also proposes the creation of a Strategic Commercial Fleet (SCF) that would consist of US-built vessels working international trades. The SCF would “provide the depth and redundancy required to sustain military logistics around the globe and ensure the continuous flow of goods to the US economy,” the plan said.

“Vessels in the SCF would receive financial support for both construction and operation, leveling the playing field between the US and subsidized foreign competition.”

Many of the proposals included in the maritime action plan require Congressional approval, so the Trump administration said it is compiling a legislative package that will be sent to Congress after the publication of Trump’s fiscal year 2027 budget request. Presidents typically send annual budget requests to Congress in February, although the timeline can be delayed.

“The Trump administration urges Congress to enact this package in tandem with existing legislative vehicles, ensuring the US maritime industry is equipped to meet the demands of global competition, national defense and economic growth,” the plan said.

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