Advocacy Brief

Scouting "Maritime Industry Merit Badge" Initiative

www.maritimebadge.org

The Challenge

• The U.S. faces a critical shortage of credentialed merchant mariners, officers, and skilled maritime professionals.

• This shortage threatens commerce, energy supply chains, and national security sealift capacity.

• A gap of 1,800+ qualified officers has already been identified, with numbers expected to grow.

• Awareness of maritime careers among American youth is extremely low.

The Solution

Create a Scouting Maritime Industry Merit Badge:

• Modeled after badges like Aviation and Railroading.

• Introduce Scouts to seamanship, navigation, shipbuilding, ports, logistics, and environmental stewardship.

• Highlight the service mission of the U.S. Merchant Marine.

• Build a pipeline from **Scouting → Academies/Training → Workforce.**

Why Scouting?

• Scouting reaches 1M+ youth annually with proven career-path badges.

• Trusted by families, educators, and employers.

• Provides a respected platform to spark exploration of maritime careers that offer high-wages, high-demand pathways in shipping, port logistics, shipbuilding, pilotage and emerging fields.

National Impact

• Strengthen Workforce: Builds future mariners, officers, and maritime professionals.

• Support Industry: Engages ports, unions, carriers, academies, and shipyards as badge counselors/hosts.

• Secure the Future: Supports U.S. economic vitality and national sealift readiness.

• High Impact, Low Cost: Mobilizes existing youth infrastructure to address a national workforce crisis.

Call to Action

We respectfully request your endorsement and support:

• Endorsements will be compiled and submitted to Scouting America for review and consideration.

• Public support highlights maritime workforce priorities and encourages broad participation.

Contact:

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