

A BILL to promote the Commerce and increase the Foreign Trade of the United States, and to provide Auxiliary Cruisers, Transports, and Seamen for Government Use when necessary.

WHEREAS the profitable employment of the surplus productive power of the farms, factories, mines, forests, and fisheries of the United States imperatively demands the expansion of its foreign commerce: And whereas the merchant vessels, officers, engineers, machinists, electricians, and seamen necessary to the expansion of the commerce of the United States are also essential as auxiliary to the forces of the United States in time of war, and otherwise and to the better security of the nation and the protection of its possessions: And whereas it is deemed especially expedient to make immediate provision to these ends: Therefore—

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled that from and after the first day of July, *anno Domini* eighteen hundred and ninety-nine, there shall be paid, subject to the provisions hereinafter contained, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to the owner of any vessel duly registered by a citizen or citizens of the United States, and being at the time of entry engaged in the foreign trade of the United States, which shall be entered in the United States, from a foreign port, or from any port belonging to the United States the trade between which and the Atlantic Gulf and Pacific coast ports of the United States shall happen not to be confined to vessels of the United States, compensation as hereinafter provided, that is to say: The Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorised and directed to contract with the owner of any vessel of the United States hereinbefore described, and registered for foreign trade, for the payment to said owner for a period of twenty years, and subject to the provisions of this Act, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sums following, namely:—

(a.) On each entry of a sail- or steam-vessel not exceeding sixteen entries in any twelve consecutive months, one and one-half cents per gross ton for each one hundred nautical miles for the first one thousand five hundred nautical miles sailed both outward and homeward bound, and one cent per gross ton for each one hundred nautical miles over one thousand five hundred nautical miles sailed both outward and homeward bound.

(b.) Steam-vessels which may be suitable for carrying the mails of the United States, or as auxiliaries to the forces of the United States in time of war or other need, if of the following tonnages and capable of maintaining the following rates of speed under the conditions hereinafter provided, shall, in addition to the compensation provided in paragraph (a) of this section, receive compensation per gross ton for each one hundred nautical miles sailed both outward and homeward bound at the following rates, namely: Vessels over one thousand five hundred gross tons—First, fourteen knots and less than fifteen knots, one cent per gross ton; second, fifteen knots and less than sixteen knots, one and one-tenth cents per gross ton; third, sixteen knots or over, one and two-tenths cents per gross ton. Vessels over three thousand gross tons—Fourth, seventeen knots and less than eighteen knots, one and four-tenths cents per gross ton; fifth, eighteen knots and less than nineteen knots, one and sixth-tenths cents per gross ton; sixth, nineteen knots or over, one and eight-tenths cents per gross ton. Vessels over eight thousand gross tons—Seventh, twenty knots and less than twenty-one knots, two cents per gross ton; eighth, twenty-one knots or over, two and three-tenths cents per gross ton. Vessels over ten thousand gross tons—Ninth, twenty-two knots and less than twenty-three knots, two and seven-tenths cents per gross ton; tenth, twenty-three knots or over, three and two-tenths cents per gross ton. No vessel shall be entitled to compensation under more than one of the tonnage and the speed classifications in this clause specified.

(c.) The mileage upon which compensation shall be paid under the hereinbefore-stated clauses (a) and (b) shall be determined by the direct customary route from the last port of departure at which cargo, passengers, or mails shall have been taken in the United States for and carried to a foreign port or a port belonging to the United States described in section one of this Act at which cargo, passengers, or mails shall have been discharged or taken, and from such last-mentioned port by the direct customary route to the first port of arrival in the United States at which cargo, passengers, or mails shall have been discharged. If during the voyage the vessel shall discharge or take cargo, passengers, or mails at two or more foreign ports, or ports belonging to the United States described in section one of this Act, the distance by the direct customary route between such ports shall also be included in the mileage upon which compensation shall be paid under the aforesaid clauses (a) and (b).

Sec. 2. That no vessel shall be entitled to compensation under section one of this Act unless at least one-fourth of her navigating crew shall be citizens of the United States, or such persons as shall be within the provisions of section twenty-one hundred and seventy-four of the Revised Statutes of the United States.

If it shall happen at any time that the foregoing-stated proportion of an American crew cannot be reasonably obtained, the Shipping Commissioner or the officer discharging his duties at any port of the United States, or the United States consul or the officer discharging his duties at the foreign port whence any such vessel is to clear, shall allow the shipment of persons not Americans to make up the necessary number of the crew.

Sec. 3. That the test for the speed of the vessels provided for in this Act shall be made under the direction and supervision of a board of naval officers, which the Secretary of the Navy shall appoint upon the application of the owner or owners of any such vessel, and the test must include not less than four hours' continuous steaming at sea in ordinary weather in water of sufficient depth to make the test a fair and just one.

Sec. 4. That a documented vessel of the United States engaged in the deep-sea fisheries for three months during twelve consecutive months shall receive a bounty annually from any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated of two dollars per gross ton: Provided that at least one-third of the crew shall be American citizens.