

Cecil in Lloyd's List: U.S. Port Fee Plan Open to Legal Challenge

March 21, 2025 William Cecil

PRACTICES Ship Sale and Purchase, Ship Construction and Conversion, Shipping

Haynes Boone Partner [William Cecil](#) spoke to *Lloyd's List* discussing the recent United States Trade Representative port levy proposals.

Washington's intention is to incentivize owners to buy ships from countries other than China, especially the US, once plans to rejuvenate its shipbuilding sector reach fruition. But it would obviously take years for American shipyards to retool and then build the requisite new tonnage.

While the U.S. government may wish to challenge China's dominance in shipbuilding, port fees for vessels that were build a decade ago are not the best way to go about it, Cecil told *Lloyd's List*.

"You might focus on ships that are on order, or not yet built in China. But to hit ships that have been built and delivered, and owned by non-Chinese entities for many years, does not make any sense. I don't see how it relates to the perceived problem."

A second limb of the plan, a requirement a certain percentage of imports to be carried on U.S.-built tonnage, might simply not be feasible.

"If these proposals come in, I'm sure that will be good for the Japanese and South Korean shipbuilding industries. But they haven't got much extra capacity.

"They might be able to put their prices up and build a few more ships. But it's unlikely they will significantly dent the proportion of ships being built in China."

To read the full article from *Lloyd's List*, click [here](#).