MYSTIC HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

152 Elm Street • P.O. Box 352 • Stonington, Connecticut 06378-0352

February 10, 2009

Environmental Committee
Legislative Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Proposed H.B. No. 5476
Mystic River Speed Enforcement

Gentlemen:

The object of this letter is to report the concerns expressed at our regular meeting on February 5 th on the proposed House Bill. Those present were our commission members plus marina owners and two harbormasters with jurisdictions in Stonington waters. Discussion centered on differences in information provided to the public, the impact that this new bill would have on boat repair services and the fact that the Mystic River is shared by two towns. The single 6mph speed limit for all areas of the river appeared to be too simple a solution considering the following issues:

1. Our commission has addressed reckless boat operation by concentrating on "No Wake" signs and an incident reporting system which can not be enforced.
2. The marinas presented their problem of on-the-water diagnosing, repairing and testing of boats for their customers. Multiple trips to Fishers Island Sound would result in prohibitive costs to their customers especially in our declining economy.
3. The Stonington Harbormaster has worked with the Stonington Police and the DEP Old Lyme enforcement officer in the past. They found that the DEP Boaters Guide provided with boater registrations did not accurately reflect the present General Statutes. This has made enforcement extremely difficult.

It is therefore requested that the present wording of H.B. No. 5476 address the above issues before approval. It is understood that an effort is being made to hold a hearing locally in Mystic. This would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Carreau, Chairman

cc: First Selectman – Edward Haberek
State Senator – Andrew Maynard
Groton HMC- Paul Bates
Harbormaster – Eric Donch
Harbormaster – Paul Watts