

CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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February 10, 2009

Commerce Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **Proposed Bill No. 6103 AA Concerning Investment In Long Island Sound Industries.**

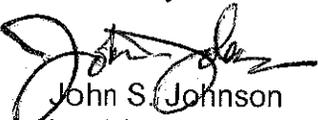
Chairmen LeBeau and Berger;

Distinguished members of the Commerce Committee the Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) urges you to support **Proposed Bill No. 6103 AA Concerning Investment In Long Island Sound Industries**. This bill addresses a vital need for funding or assisting in the funding of enterprises like fishing, boating and recreation industries, all significant contributors to the tourism industry. The economy has had wide ranging impacts and these industries have been severely impacted as have others. The difference is that the waterfront commercial properties, the marinas and boat dealers, have little leeway to deviate from their businesses. The waterfront is reserved for waterfront dependent uses only. Effectively, those businesses located at the water's edge have given up any future development rights to the state and are forever now restricted to their present industry. They don't have the ability to sellout to a developer for a huge return or as a retirement exit strategy.

The Department of Economic and Community Development is tasked with supporting and developing businesses in need and the recreational marine industry is certainly one that qualifies. Dredging and harbor maintenance are reoccurring issues and expensive programs that require an elaborate and time consuming permitting process. Some financial assistance from a state agency is appropriate because of the restrictions other state agencies have imposed on these industries. The environmental regulations have become particularly complex and costly requiring a significant reinvestment in the infrastructure for most waterfront facilities. All this at a time when the economy is not allowing for any excess of earnings or savings.

We urge you to support **Proposed Bill No. 6103 AA Concerning Investment In Long Island Sound Industries**. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue and please know that we are available to discuss this at any time.

Sincerely,


John S. Johnson
Legislative Chair


Grant W. Westerson
Executive Director

Linda A. Kowalski
The Kowalski Group