

CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

20 Plains Road
Essex, CT 06475-1501

(860) 767-2645 • Fax (860) 767-3559 • e-mail cmta@snet.net

February 6, 2009

Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **Proposed Bill No. 5471, AA Authorizing Bonds of the State for Dredging.**

Chairmen Meyer and Roy;

Distinguished members of the Environment Committee, the Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) urges you to support **Proposed Bill No. 5471, AA Authorizing Bonds of the State for Dredging**. This bill addresses a vital need for funding the many dredging projects necessary to keep safe and navigable the State of Connecticut's waterways, harbors, and marine facilities. The previously authorized Harbor Improvement Account is of little use without adequate funding and this bill would provide the necessary funds or seed funds to make sure that projects are not overlooked or delayed.

Managed by the Connecticut Maritime Commission, this fund would be available to augment projects deemed significant by the Commissioners. Most dredging projects occurring within the state are private and privately funded or federal but there are many public parts to these projects and the value of safe navigation and appropriately maintained waterways is key to the safe passage of the many private, recreational, and commercial vessels that ply Connecticut's waters.

Extensive dredge material testing regimes, significant material handling restrictions and limited disposal areas as well as drastically increased costs and shortened windows of dredging opportunity have all added to the increased expenses of keeping a harbor usable or a waterway useful and particularly safe. The addition of this bonding fund would also start to make the coastal routes more useful for highway transportation relief.

We urge you to support **Proposed Bill No. 5471, AA Authorizing Bonds of the State for Dredging**. 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