

CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **S.B. 1062 (RAISED) AN ACT REDUCING THE WAITING PERIOD UNDER THE VESSEL LIEN PROCESS**

Chairmen Maynard and Guererra;

Distinguished Chairmen and Members of the Transportation Committee, the Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) and our membership urge you to support **S.B. 1062 (RAISED) AN ACT REDUCING THE WAITING PERIOD UNDER THE VESSEL LIEN PROCESS** and shorten the waiting period under this vessel lien process. This process, outlined in C.G.S. Sec. 49-55a, is how a boatyard or marina property owner may gain possession of a vessel in storage after her owner has long since stopped paying the bills. To a property owner the land under the abandoned vessel is worth much more to their business than the usually tired, older vessel. Spring launching time is when it is feasible to have these abandoned boats relocated or sold/given to someone who will properly care for them.

The process is generally initiated after month's even years of waiting for yard bill payments and adding the appropriate legal advertising and the ending auction, the current process is too lengthy. This initiative would shorten the waiting period from 60 days to 30 days before an auction may be held. With the short spring boating season in Connecticut's latitude this one month difference is important. All the usual protections for the vessel owner would stay in place such as proper advertising, legal notices and if there is any overage at auction, it would go back to the owner or escheat to the State. The vessel lien process is only initiated if the vessel owner is long deficient in paying their bills.

This economy has impacted everyone and it's not unusual for bills to pile up or be paid late. This process is not utilized for prompt bill collection services but for the repetitive and long term nonpayment of vessel invoices and the actual abandonment of the subject vessel. Most owners have had months or even years of opportunity to clear up their outstanding obligations and have refused to do so. This lien process is then used by the marina/boatyard owner to obtain legal possession of the abandoned vessel so that it can be properly disposed of by either sale or destruction to make the property available again.

We urge you to support proposed **S.B. 1062 (RAISED) AN ACT REDUCING THE WAITING PERIOD UNDER THE VESSEL LIEN PROCESS**. This is the time in the present economy to ease the costs and burdens on businesses. They have all they can do to stay in business and support the workforce that they have. This initiative would speed up a very necessary process. We would be pleased to discuss this at any time. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John S. Johnson
Legislative Chair

Grant W. Westerson
President