CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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March 7, 2011

Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **H.B. No. 6160 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING SAFE BOATING CERTIFICATES AND THE RENTAL OF VESSELS BY BOAT LIVERYPERSONS**

Chairmen Meyer and Roy:

The membership of the Connecticut Marine Trades Association urges you to **not** support **H.B. No. 6160 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING SAFE BOATING CERTIFICATES AND THE RENTAL OF VESSELS BY BOAT LIVERYPERSONS.** This bill essentially requires a person renting a vessel for 14 days or less to get a Safe Boating Certificate or its equivalent prior to any rentals. It is unwarranted and unnecessary and would impose a significant burden on the boat rental industry in Connecticut.

When Connecticut's Safe Boating Program was started over 15 years ago, the boat rental segment of the industry was exempted from the need for a Safe Boating Certificate if the rental period was for 14 days or less. It was assumed that most of the renters would be visitors from out of state and thus not required to have a Certificate if they were operating their own out-of-state registered vessel on Connecticut's waters. That assumption proved correct. It was recognized back then that any potential for accidents or exposure to the public would be minimal. That too proved correct. There has been little or no history of boats rented causing damage or injury. H.B No.6160 is therefore unwarranted and should not be supported.

The wording of this proposed legislation is also flawed as it would require a Safe Boating Certificate or its equivalent for any renter that may rent an unpowered vessel. That is not a requirement by today's statues, nor should it be. Obviously something overlooked during the drafting of this initiative.

We strongly suggest that this bill not move forward. It is unnecessary, boating accident records don't support the need for it and it is very business negative. Vessel livery businesses have made significant investments in their businesses, generating taxes, providing employment and access to the waterfront for the public. Please do not support **H.B. No. 6160 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING SAFE BOATING CERTIFICATES AND THE RENTAL OF VESSELS BY BOAT LIVERYPERSONS**. We would be very pleased to discuss these issues at length at any time.

Thank you.

John S. Johnson
Legislative Chair

Grant W. Westerson
President