

Senator Edward Meyer, Representative Linda M. Gentile and the Environmental Committee

Concerning HR Bill # 6541 hearing on Friday March 8, 2013.

I OPPOSE THIS BILL AND OPPOSE ALLOWING ONLINE COURSES IN BOATER AND HUNTER SAFETY.

I know that your committee is considering changing the law to allow a short on-line computer course to take the place of classroom-based safe boating courses. That's the change in the law that is also going to allow on-line training for firearms. This is a really bad idea. Please do not allow this new law to go into effect.

I think that this regulation change is being rushed, I don't believe the public has been made well enough aware of it - it is the first I heard of it. When I took my course in boating safety, I learned as much from the other students in the class, by the questions that they asked, and the interesting way that the teacher answered their questions. Some computers may be able to do this - but it doesn't sound as if this proposal will work that way.

There are lots of things to learn about boating that aren't in the book. If you are sitting at home with your PC, you just can not "hear" what the other students are asking, and what the instructor is telling them. My teacher brought some "training aids" into the class - radios, ropes, charts ... A computer can't show you how to dock a boat - or tell you what mistakes it made while it was learning. A computer cannot properly teach weapons training and safety for hunters and especially for children. This is an unsafe proposal which puts people at risk.

On line training is good for some things, but if it's not good for "drivers ed" - it can't be good for "boaters ed."

I STRONGLY oppose changing the regulations/laws regarding Boating Safety and Hunter Safety training at this time. Thank you!

Respectfully,
Carol Dwyer
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