

For the Environment Committee, concerning HR Bill # 6541 - hearing on Friday March 8, 2013

I heard 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 ^

- this rule change has not been well publicized so that the public can comment on it
- on line training is good for some things, but it's not good for "drivers ed" - it can't be good for "boaters ed"
- you can't ask a question of a computer
- you can learn from other students while you are at home taking the course on your laptop
- you learn about boating from boaters - this is a cold computer, not a real person
- I had to work for my "diploma" - why should the new students have it really easy and not know as much as I when boating
- how do you know that the person taking the test is really the person who took the course
- 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.

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 ... How can students learning through a computer ever "see" what boating is about?

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

Thank you -

Respectfully,
Mark Petkevich

63 Greenfield Ave
Stratford, CT 06614