

March 4, 2013

Senator Edward Meyer and Representative Linda M. Gentile

This letter is in regards to H.B. No. 6541 and **my opposition** to an act concerning On-line Education Options for Boating and Hunting Safety.

I have been involved in the delivery of instructor led & on-line classes for over 15 years, working w/top tier universities & fortune 100 companies. I earned my Master's degree from Quinnipiac University on-line and I am an advocate of on-line educations BUT not when it relates to safety programs. From a training perspective, I have observed most of our customers preferred instructor led courses over on-line.

I cannot personally speak to Hunting Safety; my only comment on this subject is with all the tragedies due to fire arms getting into the wrong hands; how can the Environmental Committee secure people's safety? Can on-line education ensure the proper procedures & training are in place? Who is to know who is sitting on the other end of the computer?

Obviously there are pros & cons to on-line education.

Pros

- Can reach a wider audience
- No travel required for both instructor or student
- Taken at your own convenience
- More appealing to younger audiences who are computer savvy

Cons

- No interaction w/the instructor or other participants
- No opportunity for the instructor to discuss real life examples of what can happen if you don't put safety first to avoid potential life threatening experiences
- No opportunity to ask questions for further clarification, the same questions your classmates may have.
- No accountability – someone else could be taking the class in your place
- There is a lot of material covered in an 8 hour SB class, it can be difficult to stay focused on the subject matter when it is computer based.
- Can be difficult to master for adults who do not have computer experience.

Over the past two years, I have observed my husband teach Safe Boating classes in CT & NY and have witnessed his students asking detailed questions, sharing experiences while listening intently to explanations on how to be responsible and safe on the water. Some of the best classes are when a husband, wife & children attend a class. You get to witness the Dad looking at his kids & them getting what he has been trying to teach them while boating. It is now reinforced by a knowledgeable Captain/Instructor.

Sincerely,

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A Captain's Wife