

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 short on-line computer courses to take the place of classroom-based safe boating and firearms/hunting courses. Please do not allow this new law to go into effect for the following reasons:

- This rule change has not been well publicized so that the public can comment on it
- Online training is good for some things, but if it's not good for "Driver's Ed", it can't possibly be good for boating or hunting.
- You can't ask a question of a computer.
- You learn about safe boating from other boaters, hunting from other hunters - not a computer.
- I had to work for my certification. Why should new students have it easy and not know as much as I do when boating or hunting?
- How can you issue a state recognized certification to a boater or hunter, when you do not know who is actually taking the tests?
- A computer can't show you how to dock a boat, operate it safely or tell you what mistakes you made while you were learning.
- A computer can't properly teach weapons training and safety for hunters and especially for children.
- A computer can't stop you from handling a rifle or operating a boat in an unsafe manner.

After the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, while everyone is attempting to legislate stricter rules, do you think an "online" safety course in gun and hunting safety is a smart idea? I certainly don't. Certified boaters out on the open water after taking an "online" safety course? Have you forgotten the boating and personal watercraft accidents that happen every year in Long Island Sound? This is an unsafe proposal which puts all people at risk.

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