

Honorable 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.

My father owned several marinas. I grew up on Marinas - around boats and boating. I have a boating license, my spouse has a license, and my ten-year-old daughter earned her license this year. I had my daughter take the course because I purchased a boat for her....in Connecticut. I could have sat her down for 8 hours, made her take an online course in boating. Instead, I decided that the it wouldn't be sufficient – she would need to take an in person course.

I'm asking you to please require people to take a boating class – one where they sit in a classroom and learn the rules. When I and other members of my family took our courses in boating safety, we 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.

Online courses can't teach you how to tie a knot. 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 cannot "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?

If my father were alive today – he would be writing you himself. Please ensure that adults and children all learn boating safety in a classroom setting. It's so very important.

Thank you -

Respectfully,

Robin Merrill

Robin Merrill, Esq.