

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

I understand 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. Please do not allow this new law to go into effect – **THIS IS A VERY BAD IDEA!**

There are many reasons why this is not a wise concept:

- Boats are a motor vehicle -- you would not allow any individual to obtain a driver's license for a car and the same should hold true for boaters. All members of my family obtained personal watercraft licenses and we take this responsibility very seriously. You should, too.
- If people are allowed to take exams on line in order to obtain a boating license, there is no way to verify that the person taking the exam is in fact the person who will receive the license.
- My safety on the water depends as much on my own knowledge and responsible behaviors as that of other boaters -- please do not compromise my safety and the safety of my family members and guests by allowing anonymous people to obtain licenses to operate watercraft.
- The bill states that this applies to "any applicant regardless of age". This cannot possibly be safe!!! Even though my five children obtained personal watercraft licenses after they were permitted by law to do so, we continue to train and monitor them for safe practices. Boating is a potentially dangerous activity and should be taken very seriously. To allow any person, regardless of age, to obtain a license, is simply irresponsible. **Safety and security should be a higher priority than any convenience this might provide.**
- The bill is also linked to hunting -- for what purpose?
- The hunting section contains the same language that it is for "any applicant regardless of age". Again, it cannot possibly be safe to allow ANY PERSON OF ANY AGE to obtain a license to hunt!

I am an educator in the State of Connecticut and I care deeply about the safety of our children -- of my own children -- and I do not believe that this is safe for anyone. People who hunt and people who boat should be old enough to PERSONALLY demonstrate that they are knowledgeable and mature enough to handle the enormous responsibilities associated with these activities.

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

Respectfully,
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