



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – February 20, 2013
Transportation Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Dan Esty
Presented By Deputy Commissioner Susan Whalen

Senate Bill No. 468 – AN ACT ALLOWING MOTOR VEHICLE AND BOAT REGISTRATIONS TO BE VALID FOR THE LIFE OF THE VEHICLE OR BOAT.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Senate Bill No. 468 – AN ACT ALLOWING MOTOR VEHICLE AND BOAT REGISTRATIONS TO BE VALID FOR THE LIFE OF THE VEHICLE OR BOAT. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

DEEP opposes this bill. This bill, which presumably would allow a boat registration to be valid for life, is in direct tension with the federal regulations that authorize our vessel registration system. Specifically, and as detailed on Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 174.1 and Section 174.27 say:

"§ 174.1 Applicability; preemptive effect. This part establishes a standard numbering system for vessels and a uniform vessel casualty reporting system for vessels by prescribing requirements applicable to the States for the approval of State numbering systems. The regulations in subparts A, B, and D of this part have preemptive effect over conflicting State or local regulation. The regulations in subpart C of this part have preemptive effect over State or local regulation within the same field, except to the extent that Congress requires the Coast Guard to allow State casualty reporting systems pursuant to 46 U.S.C. chapter 131..." and,

"§ 174.27 Duration of certificate of number. A certificate of number must not be valid for more than 3 years." *(emphasis added)*

Boat registrations provide in excess of \$5 million dollars a year to the General Fund, about half of which comes to the DEEP annually to provide match for the US Coast Guard's Recreational Boating Safety Grant. This grant provides approximately \$1.3 million dollars annually to DEEP that is used to reduce fatalities, injuries and property damage of recreational boaters, specifically by, administering our mandatory boating education programs, marking speed zones on rivers and some lakes, providing marine law enforcement and improving navigation safety on all waters of the State. Boat registrations are directly tied to our compliance with the federally prescribed system; no fundamental change such as that proposed in this bill can or should be contemplated.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact DEEP's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance, at 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov