

# CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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March 7, 2014

Environment Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **R.B. No. 5423 An Act Concerning the Speed of Vessels Along Certain Portions of the Connecticut River.**

Chairmen Meyer & Gentile, Senator Chapin and Distinguished Members;

The Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) and our member businesses urge you to not support **R.B. No. 5423 An Act Concerning the Speed of Vessels Along Certain Portions of the Connecticut River**. Passage of this bill and the subsequent changes to the existing regulations would significantly decrease the safety of persons boating on the indicated waters. This subject has been discussed at length a number of times by the CT DEEP Boating Advisory Council and an overwhelming majority of members have turned this initiative down as being completely against existing regulations and serving no general good.

Steerage speed only or 5-6 mph has been the rule in congested or restrictive Connecticut waters for many years for good reason. The upper Connecticut River in the vicinity of Hartford's northern Bulkeley Bridge to the southern limits of the city is just that type of waters, complete with narrow channels, launching ramps, two bridges, and occasional marine obstructions. As the river in this area is the northern end of a well-traveled waterway, it can be crowded on weekends and when events are going on in the city. The speed limit in such areas is slow-no-wake within 100 feet of shore, a dock, pier, float or anchored or moored vessel. Horizontal clearances through both bridges are 100' and 155', neither allowing for other than slow speeds for safety and then add in the proximity of a busy launching ramp in East Hartford. This explains why the restrictions are in place and specifically mentioned for this roughly one mile long area almost to Wethersfield Cove.

We urge you again to not support **R.B. No. 5423 An Act Concerning the Speed of Vessels Along Certain Portions of the Connecticut River**. The issue has been well discussed by knowledgeable and experienced marine professionals and law enforcement officials who find that the current speed restrictions for that area are necessary and not overburdening on the recreation of anyone. Rather they take position that safety is of utmost concern in such a congested area and would like to see the initiative not move forward. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue and please know that we are available to discuss them at any time.

Sincerely,

John S. Johnson  
Vice Chairman – Legislative Affairs

Grant W. Westerson  
President

Linda A. Kowalski  
The Kowalski Group