

CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **S.B. No. 71 (Raised) An Act Concerning On-Line Education Options for Boating and Hunting Safety.**

Chairmen Meyer & Gentile, Senator Chapin and Distinguished Members;

The Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) and our member businesses urge you to support **S.B. No. 71 (Raised) An Act Concerning On-Line Education Options for Boating and Hunting Safety**. Since the beginning of Connecticut's Safe Boating Education program 25 years ago, instruction was limited to classroom only (plus a very few people that self-studied for an equivalency exam) however everyone was required to take, complete, and pass a proctored state exam to earn a diploma that could then be exchanged for the necessary Safe Boating or Personal Watercraft Certificate. Either of which is required for a Connecticut resident to operate a power boat on Connecticut waters.

Times and technology have significantly changed and many educational programs are now being taught and completed by using electronic means through instructional interaction on the internet. On-line courses are now sophisticated enough to know and meter the time that a student spends on any one subject. Accepted and approved products will not allow a student to rush through the material just to gamble on the test scores. Many different venues now rely on electronic learning and do it successfully; electronic learning for Boating and Hunting should be allowed as proposed by DEEP. This would be as an alternative to the conventional classroom instruction, still being offered by independent instructors.

We urge you again to support **S.B. No. 71(Raised) An Act Concerning On-Line Education Options for Boating and Hunting Safety**. It is a necessary migration into a new technology that many other venues have already proven successful and it will augment existing instruction well.

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
Legislative Chair

Grant W. Westerson
President

Linda A. Kowalski
The Kowalski Group