



My name is Tasha Cusson and I am here representing my family's businesses Atlantic Outboard and Westbrook Marine Center. We're a boat dealership and multi marina location facility in Westbrook, CT. Over the past 12 months, we've invested over \$1,000,000 into our businesses because of the excitement, optimism and opportunity in Connecticut since lowering the sales tax on Boats, and finally making Connecticut competitive with its neighboring States.

Connecticut Legislators realized the business Rhode Island and New York were stealing from our boat dealerships and marinas and took action. The numbers speak for themselves. Boat sales are up, not only at our dealership, but throughout the State, our marina is at 100% occupancy and we have a waiting list. Due to the increase in boat sales we've had to hire 3 additional full time employees. These employees live in three separate senate districts.

At our main dealership building, 475 Boston Post Rd in Westbrook, we just built a new service building and completed renovated and expanded our showroom. The renovations and expansion cost our family business about \$750,000. We began the re-model of our showroom in the Fall of 2018, after we saw a big increase in demand and interest for new and used boat sales.

We purchased our second marina, located at 625 Boston Post Road in Westbrook in 2016. The current bulkhead at this facility is using pilings that were at one point trees that were cut down to build I-95...owning the marina since 2016 we had no plans of investing and re-developing the marina as the marina docked boats safely and orderly. However, since the sale tax reduction, we've been selling bigger, more expensive boats. Thus, creating the need for an updated and modern facility to dock these boats. We have just received the permit from the CT DEEP and plan to invest over \$400,000 in the next 2 months into this facility.

Had we known that the sales tax reduction was temporary, we would have never invested over \$1,000,000 into our businesses. I can stand before you today and tell you that these investments were 100% fueled by the increase in boat sales due to the tax reduction.

Raising the sales tax and eliminating the trade in tax credit will not only hurt our family, but the dozens of family owned businesses in our communities...restaurants, tackle shops, other marinas and much more.

Connecticut has **finally** allowed us to be competitive with our neighboring States. Why should we allow Rhode Island and New York steal Connecticut's jobs and businesses?