2025 Legislative Session Off to a Productive Rigorous Start!
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January 30, 2025

The 2025 Legislative Session in Hartford convened on Wednesday, January 8. Three weeks into the session, committees are now working to decide which bills before them will be advanced to a public hearing.

Right now, the legislative team is tracking 20 different House and Senate bills that would affect, to one extent or the other, the recreational boating sector.
Here are a few notable ones:

House Bill 5462—Would change the fee for registering pontoon boats from the current flat $40 fee to one that is based on the length of the pontoon. This would mirror how the assessments are currently applied to boats.

Senate Bill 59—Senator Heather Somers, a strong supporter of recreational boating, proposes that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection conduct a plan of locations that might be suitable for placement of dredged materials best suited for beneficial use.

House Bill 6244—Legislation has been filed whose stated purpose is to open waterfronts to the public so that they have easier access to waterways. Since this is a proposed bill, it is a concept for now and lacks the details of a bill that has been "drafted" in statutory language. It is a concern and we are monitoring it.

Several bills regarding specific bodies of water have been introduced. Senate Bill 313 will establish speed limits on Mashapaug Lake in Union, while Senate Bill 55 will increase speed limits in the summer months on Wyassup Lake in North Stonington. Senate Bill 641 will establish a boat washing station at Gardner Lake in Salem.

See the attached Bill Tracking indicating bills that we are monitoring for CMTA.

CMTA's legislative agenda for this session focuses on three items: 1) Retaining the 2.99 percent sales tax on boat sales; 2) Providing state funding in the new account established last session in Public Act 24-48, which is designed to assist marinas with the higher costs of dredging, and 3) Opposing bills that overregulate recreational boating and businesses.

We have had excellent meetings with key legislators on our issues. Tasha Cusson, CMTA president, Bob Petzold, CMTA legislative chair, and my government relations team have made a very strong case for these three items. We have received information and assistance from Steve Tagliatela and Kate Mosley, Saybrook Point Resort and Marina, who have told their story about their permit to dredge which has been approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and DEEP. That work has been ongoing since October where the dredged material is delivered to the Central Long Island Disposal Site located South of East Haven. New York state did not object to the permit.

Our networking has included meetings with the Finance, Revenue and Bonding committee leadership as well as the co-chairs of the Commerce committee, which took the lead in enacting last session's landmark bill to help marinas and other businesses with dredging costs. As mentioned, our task now is to advocate for funds to be allocated in this new account in the upcoming two-year budget. That will fall under the purview of the Appropriations committee, who we have also met with.

Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz and Attorney General William Tong both saw firsthand the state-of-the-art array of products that are available to boating aficionados at the recent Hartford Boat Show 2025 held at Mohegan Sun. These key public officials toured the boat show room floor and talked with exhibitors and CMTA leaders along the way. They were extremely impressed.

There is a significant bipartisan support for boating and tourism in the state. Legislators know that CMTA members are good environmental stewards of our waterways. There may be times this session where the team needs members to contact your local state Representative and state Senator about issues important to recreational boating. Please take the requested action when you receive an alert. Legislators *will* listen to their constituents.