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Government Relations Update for the Connecticut Marine Trades Association
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The 2025 legislative session will convene on Wednesday, January 8. This will be a budget session.

Continuity is the word of the day: The leaders of the Connecticut House and Connecticut Senate will stay intact. We could see a few changes in who chairs the various committees, but, overall, the legislators who drive policy changes will continue in that role.

There will be several bills that come up that will be of interest to CMTA. As always, we will bring the facts to our discussions. CMTA members are stewards of the environment who employ thousands of individuals in good paying jobs that offer recreational boating, maintenance and boat repair services to the citizens of Connecticut.

Legislation that we foresee of significant interest to CMTA includes:

- Possible changes to the 2.99 percent tax rate on boat sales.
- Funding for the Small Harbor Projects Improvement Account that marinas could tap for the first time.
- Right to Repair mandate on boats.
- Constitutional amendment on environmental protection.
- Re-run/resubmittal of language in last year's House Bill 5004, the so called "Green Monster".
- Possible bill in response to the tragic Old Saybrook boating deaths.

As in the past, CMTA will offer written and verbal testimony to legislative committees when a bill has a public hearing that concerns boating interests.

Governor Ned Lamont will address the General Assembly on the budget in early February. That is the most important issue that will be taken up in the 2025 and 2026 legislative sessions. spending in fiscal year 2026 (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026) and fiscal year 2027 (July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027).

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January will be a busy month as we traditionally will have met in person or remotely with the co-chairs and leadership of the Environment committee, which has jurisdiction over many of the issues of cognizance. Other committees of interest include the Transportation committee, Commerce committee or Appropriations committee.

The government relations team will also participate in periodic meetings requested and then facilitated by state Sen. Cathy Osten on the issue of dredging. As CMTA members know, Sen. Osten serves as Senate chair of the Appropriations committee and was instrumental in the appropriations of $3 million in state funds that can be devoted to dredging. CMTA's government relations team had a major success in 2024 by lobbying for Public Act 24- 48 which, for the first time creates a Small Harbor Improvement Project Account that can be accessed by marinas to help with their infrastructure and dredging costs. In 2025, CMTA will seek additional funding for the new account.

The 2025 legislative session will be the start of two-year terms for all 151 members of the state House and 36 members of the state Senate.

As a result of the November 5 elections, we will see 22 new legislators sworn in as members of the General Assembly. These include 20 new state House members and two state Senate members.

Please take a moment to read the attached list of new state legislators that our firm has prepared. If you are going to be represented by one of these legislators, reach out and introduce yourself. They listen to their constituents.

We look forward to working with you in 2025.