ROME SMITH KOWALSKI

Legislative Update
Linda Kowalski

The 2025 General Assembly will convene on Wednesday, January 8, 2025.

We believe a number of key issues will be coming up that will be of interest to recreational boaters. CMTA has several priorities, and these are outlined here.

First, we will be seeking an appropriation in the fiscal year 2026 budget for funds in the Small Harbor Improvement Projects account that was created last session in Public Act 24-48. This will be a top priority as the law specifically allows private marinas to access these dollars for dredging and other costs.

Second, we will be monitoring tax and finance discussions and aggressively engage if a proposal is raised for public hearing to repeal the 2.99 percent sales tax rate on boat sales. At a minimum, we will need to have CMTA members oppose any adverse action through emails and phone calls. We will have a better idea on where the tax issues stand in February.

Third, we will be monitoring past legislation of interest to CMTA. The following is a list of recent issues from the 2023 and 2024 sessions that could come up once again for debate:

- Right-to-Repair on boats
- Boat warranties
- Riparian buffers
- Lower legal Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) from .08 to .05 percent for impaired boating
- "Green Monster" carbon-free bill
- Workforce Development (DECD)
- Other bills that arise and are of interest/concern

We appreciated that House Republican Leader Vincent Candelora, and his staff, were able to accept our request to participate in the dredging zoom meeting held by CMTA on Nov. 26. We find these forums to be valuable to CMTA's members. We were also pleased to set up a very productive meeting with U.S. Senator Chris Murphy this past Monday. The meeting went very well and allowed CMTA to bring their ideas and concerns to him directly. Finally, we are working now to set up our next "check in" with U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney and expect to have an update on that in the near future.

We wish everyone *Happy Holidays* and will be back with updates as the 2025 session convenes.