

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

My 56 slip holders in Providence and 76 in East Providence ask you to vote down these new taxes proposed, relative to boating. Rhode Island has 400 miles of coastline. Local residents and many boat owners who do not live in Rhode Island all register and store their boats here, many for the tax benefits. Many families, local fishermen, and tourists all enjoy the sport. This state benefits greatly from this with revenue created relative to boating. The current tax exemption is our last standing benefit for a state that ranks 50 out of 50 for small businesses.

On a personal note my home was just re-evaluated, my taxes are going up. The cost of electricity is egregious, and continuing to go up considerably, home heating is almost unaffordable, you can't get tax credit the way you do with a car when trading in a truck (the only state left that does this) and now we are considering taxing boats??? How can the average Rhode Island resident afford any more, and where do we cut back?

One way to cut back would be simply not registering boats, or USCG Documentation, or registering them in a tax and paperwork friendly state like New Hampshire. As a marina manager and part time yacht and small craft broker I assure you many vessels operating the waterways on a daily basis are not registered properly, if at all. I can think of four (4) abandoned vessels within seven (7) miles of the RI State House that have sunk and the owners have walked away, they are still there, underwater as of today, 5/5/2025. As a boat ages, oftentimes they become abandoned at marinas, boat ramps, parking lots and so on. It can be very costly to dispose of an old vessel. New taxes on boats will only add to this problem.

Waterfront access should not be restricted to the rich. Some people call their boats home, if not seasonally, full-time. There are many individuals residing here in the Ocean State, living a modest life calling a boat home. At a time where we have a housing crisis here in Rhode Island, this new tax will hurt some of these vulnerable people to living a minimalist lifestyle. Many of the representatives on this committee deal with housing shortage related issues state wide. So, while theirs calls for more affordable housing across the state such as ADU's, tiny houses and other creative solutions, why would this committee impose new taxes on an individual's creative and affordable solution to that problem?

In conclusion, because of the unintended consequences of the bill, and in an effort to avoid homelessness, further gentrification of our precious waterfront and discrimination in our harbors, let's continue to offer affordable waterfront access to all who live, work and visit The Ocean State, please oppose H6256.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

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