

## Chris O'Brien

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**From:** Logan Cleary <logan\_cleary@uri.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 6, 2025 8:59 AM  
**To:** House Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition to H6256 and the Reimplementation of Boat Taxes

### To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to bill H6256 and the proposed reimplementation of sales and property taxes on boats in Rhode Island.

This legislation would severely harm both recreational and commercial boating industries in our state. I have lived in southern Rhode Island my entire life and have been around boats since I was a kid. Over the years, I've worked hard to purchase and restore several small boats. That hard work has translated into significant spending at local marinas, stores like West Marine, and through various local service providers. Boating is more than just a hobby for me—it's a way of life and a significant contributor to the local economy.

Every time I take my boat out, I spend money on gas, tackle, food, and other supplies. Like many others, I look forward to spending Sundays on the water after a long week of work. If a property tax were to be implemented, this enjoyable and important part of life would become far more expensive, discouraging participation and reducing spending across many sectors.

Additionally, there are serious concerns about the logistics of this bill. How exactly will the state assess the value of each boat? Boats vary widely in condition and value, and estimating their worth would be extremely difficult and inconsistent. Will inspectors be sent out? Will there be broad and likely inaccurate estimates?

Then there's the issue of determining a boat's "home port." What about large commercial vessels involved in offshore wind projects? These ships may spend the entire year in Rhode Island waters but are registered elsewhere and would likely not be taxed. On the other hand, some boat owners from out of state could falsely claim their boats are docked in places like Florida to avoid paying Rhode Island taxes. How will the state track this movement and enforce tax collection fairly?

Tourism in Rhode Island depends heavily on boating activities such as fishing charters, whale watching, lighthouse tours, visits to Block Island, commercial fishing, restaurants, and private charters. Increasing costs through this tax will make these services more expensive and will hurt our already fragile tourism industry.

This bill would do far more harm than good to Rhode Island's economy—an economy still recovering from the impacts of COVID-19. I urge you to please vote **NAY** on bill H6256.

Sincerely,  
Logan Cleary  
Charlestown RI