

Chris O'Brien

From: Henseler, Sean P., CIV, NAVWARCOL <sean.henseler@usnwc.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 10:38 AM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: Vote NO on House Bill 2025 H6256

Importance: High

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to vote **NO** on the proposal to reinstate the boat tax in Rhode Island.

Reinstating this tax would reverse nearly two decades of progress that our state has made in strengthening the marine trades industry. Since the repeal of the boat tax in 1993, Rhode Island has become a magnet for boaters, boat buyers, and marine businesses, helping to build a strong and sustainable segment of our economy. The tax repeal created a competitive advantage that neighboring states simply do not offer — and the results speak for themselves: increased boat registrations, expanded local spending, and the creation of good-paying jobs in small, locally owned marine businesses.

If the boat tax returns, that competitive edge vanishes. Boats will leave the state for tax-free alternatives. Spending on maintenance, storage, and equipment will decline sharply. Small marine businesses — many of which are family-run — will suffer the consequences through layoffs and reduced revenues. The ripple effect will hit working families the hardest.

Now is not the time to undermine a successful economic strategy. Rhode Island should continue to support policies that grow jobs and attract investment, not penalize an industry that fuels local employment and tourism.

Finally- enough is enough with respect to taxing cars, boats, etc. Tax income. Tax real property (e.g. land and houses) but stop trying to tax everything in sight because you can. Our property taxes are already high enough!!!

Please protect Rhode Island's marine economy. Vote **NO** on the boat tax.

Very respectfully,
Sean

Prof. Sean P. Henseler
Director of Fleet Engagement
College of Maritime Operational Warfare (CMOW)
U.S. Naval War College, Newport RI
(w) 401.856-5802 (c) 401.439.3649
SIPR: sean.henseler@nwc.navy.smil.mil