

July 23, 2007

Dear BoatUS Member,

For 34 years the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has exempted discharges from recreational boats from the Clean Water Act permit system. Regrettably, a recent court ruling cancelled this permit exemption. EPA is required by the court decision to develop and implement by September 30, 2008 a national permit system for ALL vessels in the United States for a variety of normal operational discharges.

We have been working behind the scenes with other boating organizations to get the exemption reinstated for recreational boats. Fortunately, the Recreational Boating Act of 2007 (H.R. 2550) has been introduced by Representatives Gene Taylor (D-Miss) and Candice Miller (R-Mich) which would protect recreational boats from being swept into this unnecessary and expensive permitting system.

It is critically important that H.R. 2550 be passed and your support is essential. Please contact your Congressman and Senators TODAY and ask that they co-sponsor or support H.R. 2550.

If the permit system becomes a reality, you will be required to pay for a state permit for each of your boats. EPA will be monitoring your deck runoff, grey water, bilge water, engine cooling water, and the use of copper bottom paints.

The original lawsuit that led to this court decision sought to address ballast water discharges from large ocean-going ships, which can introduce damaging aquatic invasive species into U.S. waters. Keeping our waterways clean and preventing the spread of invasive species is of utmost importance to the future of boating. But taking a complex permitting system designed for industrial dischargers and applying it to recreational boats will not yield significant environmental benefits and it will come at a very high cost. Requiring recreational boaters to purchase a permit would not prevent the spread of invasive species.

BoatUS has been a leader in educating boaters about Clean Boating practices for more than a decade. Our nonprofit Foundation has funded local education projects on invasive species prevention, helped develop voluntary Clean Marina programs, and authored much of the country's Clean Boating outreach. These positive education efforts are making a difference.

*Please ask your elected federal representatives to support H.R. 2550. It is common-sense legislation.* As you send your emails to your Members of Congress, please copy BoatUS at [GovtAffairs@BoatUS.com](mailto:GovtAffairs@BoatUS.com). We'd also like to ask you to send a copy of your correspondence to the EPA, so they can see how this will affect citizens. However, please know that if you choose to send it to EPA, it will become a part of the public record. EPA's email is [ow-docket@epa.gov](mailto:ow-docket@epa.gov), and your email needs to have a subject line with Docket ID No. OW-2007-0483.

For More Information:

[Click here for Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Click here for a sample email letter](#)

[Click here to easily send an email to your Members of Congress.](#)

*[Forward this Action Alert](#) to your friends, your fishing and boat club, your marina neighbors, and your local press!*

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Margaret Podlich

BoatUS Government Affairs

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