

July 26, 2011

Dear Boating Caucus Member:

Many of your constituents are undoubtedly out on the water enjoying their boats every weekend. With the weather as hot as it has been these past weeks, that would certainly be a great choice. There is, however, a significant threat to this enjoyable, family-oriented recreational opportunity, and that is the introduction of E15 ethanol-blended gasoline into the nation's fuel supply. The Environmental Protection Agency is proposing just such a move, and we are not being alarmist when we say that E15 has the potential to cause significant problems for the engines in virtually every power boat in the country.

There is a way to prevent this disaster, however, and that's an amendment that Rep. John Sullivan (R-Okla.) and Rep. Gary Peters (D-Mich.) will be offering on H.R. 2584, the appropriations bill for Interior, Environment and Related Agencies. This amendment is expected to be voted upon this week, perhaps as early as Thursday. The Sullivan-Peters amendment would prohibit the EPA from using any funds appropriated by H.R. 2584 to implement the E15 waiver. It would therefore stop this attack on America's boaters and other consumers and would prevent untold billions of dollars in engine damage. That's why the National Marine Manufacturers Association, whose members manufacture most of the boat engines that would be damaged by E15, strongly supports the Sullivan-Peters amendment and urges your support for it.

Why are we so riled up about this issue? The Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory has tested the effects of E15 gasoline on some standard marine engines, and the majority of these engines suffered significant damage or exhibited poor engine runability, performance, and difficult starting---none of which is acceptable on a boat at sea. The results of these tests have not been made public, and we have been asked by DOE not to say anything specific about their results until the report is final, but we can say for certain that E15 is not a good fuel for power boat engines. The United States Coast Guard does not support the EPA's partial waiver to allow E15 into the marketplace, and every major automobile manufacturer has gone on record as saying that E15 is incompatible with their engines; many of them have stated unequivocally that E15 would void the engine's warranty. NMMA fully supports the Sullivan-Peters amendment. It is the right thing to do at this time, and we hope you will give it your most careful consideration.

Sincerely,

James T. Currie

Legislative Director

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