

## S. 2766, Clean Boating Act Talking Points (Senate) National Boat Permitting Issue

March 14, 2008

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When calling, identify yourself, the name of your company, and ask to speak to the Chief of Staff or the Legislative Director. If either is unavailable, you can ask to speak to the Legislative Assistant that handles transportation or environmental issues.

- I am calling to bring to your attention a matter of great importance to my company and the boating industry and ask for your support. As you may know, due to a recent federal court decision, all recreational boats will, by September of 2008, be required to obtain a federal or state permit to operate their vessel.
- Although the court case was about regulating ballast water from foreign ships, its broad ruling overturned a 35 year old exemption that applied to the water-based, incidental discharges of all vessels, including recreational boats.
- This means that, for things like rainwater run-off and engine cooling water, my consumers will have to go through a complex and potentially costly federal and state bureaucracy to get a permit just to go out of the water with their friends and family. They may have to get multiple permits if they operate in different states.
- As you can imagine, this is going to drive people away from boating. We are trying very hard to get people into the boating lifestyle, which is supposed to be about fun, family and friends. These permits are going to cost our industry consumers, and their going to cost my business jobs.
- Let me just be clear about this. We are talking about incidental, water-based discharges. Oil, raw sewage, hazardous pollutants and garbage—these are already regulated. Forcing family boaters to get commercial permits makes no sense.
- There is currently bipartisan legislation, sponsored by Environment and Public Works Chair Barbara Boxer and Senator Bill Nelson and others that would restore—for recreational boats—the longstanding, commonsense exemption for incidental discharges. **This bill is S. 2766, the Clean Boating Act of 2008. We ask you to cosponsor this bill.**
- We are running out of time. In September of 2008—a few months from now—this permitting system must go into effect. We need Congressional relief now.

Thank you.