

Committees:

Aging and Long Term Care, Chair
Transportation
State and Local Government

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Representative Steven Arndt
Ohio House of Representatives, 89th House District

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, and Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 211 which would make the process of getting a boat title in the state of Ohio easier.

In my own region, the Western Lake Erie basin has one of the 3rd highest concentrations of watercraft in the nation. As a state, Ohio has the 9th highest registry of watercraft in the United States. We are blessed that many journey to waterways throughout Ohio to live, work, and play, especially in the summer.

However, when the cost of repairs exceed the value of the boat, many owners choose to walk away. This problem is not unique to Ohio, many other states, especially in the Great Lakes region, have struggled to address this issue. With the many boat owners that come to Ohio, the amount of boats that become abandoned in local marinas can really add up.

Current Ohio Revised Code provides a pathway for marina owners to remove boats that have been abandoned in a marina. However, it is an extremely onerous process for local marina owners that can take over 6 months, that involves expensive legal fees with no guarantee of success or that they will be reimbursed for any of these costs. These challenges are so prohibitive that many marina owners are forced to keep the boats on their properties.

My legislation would provide an easier path for marina owners. With this legislation, a marina owner can claim the title of a “vessel or outboard motor” if

- 1) The watercraft has been left unclaimed on the person’s property for 20 days or more & the owner does not have a valid storage or repair contract with the owner or lienholder of the vessel
- 2) The marina owner sends notice by certified mail with the location of the boat, to the address of the last known owner of the vessel or lienholder.
- 3) The certified mail returns with either a signed receipt or was notified that the delivery of the certified mail was not possible.

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- 4) The vessel/outboard motor continues to remain unclaimed for more than 10 days after the required notice was signed by the owner or lienholder or the day that the marina owner was notified that delivery was not possible.
- 5) The marina owner executes an affidavit confirming that the all of the preceding requirements are fulfilled.

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, and Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation committee thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this legislation. I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

