



LAKE ERIE MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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Annual
Marine
Exhibitions
Produced by
Lake Erie
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Association

Chairwoman Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Bishoff and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 84.

My name is Jim Armington and I own and operate Buckeye Sports Center in Peninsula, Ohio. I am also the current Chairman of the Lake Erie Marine Trades Association (LEMTA).

HB 84 would designate June as "Ohio Goes Boating Month". I believe that codifying this designation will not only help make people more aware of all the wonderful types of boating activities available in Ohio, it will also help promote state parks, and generate more business for boat dealerships, marinas, yacht clubs, gas docks, and retailers selling boating accessories.

Mid-America Boat Show

Cleveland
Ohio

Catawba Island Boat Show

Port Clinton
Ohio

Michigan City In-Water Boat Show

Michigan City
Indiana

North American In-Water Boat Show

Sandusky
Ohio

Ohio is fortunate to have a great Department of Natural Resources, which operates many State parks and boating facilities. A promotion to introduce more people to those facilities would be a significant benefit to the Department and the citizens of Ohio. Boating of all levels (kayaking, canoeing, sailing, paddle boards, and power boats) could be enjoyed by more Ohioans if there was information readily available about how and where to participate.

LEMTA is an association of businesses, associations, clubs, and individuals involved in the business of boating. LEMTA supports the more than 700 Ohio businesses in the marine industry statewide. LEMTA is committed to investing in Ohio Goes Boating Month by asking businesses across the state to tag all of their advertising and promotions with the "OGBM" logo for the month of June and plans to promote the initiative not only at new boat shows in June, capitalizing on the program, but also at all the other boat shows across the state in the spring and fall.

Our organization wants to promote boating and the use of the facilities in Ohio to keep people boating in Ohio instead of traveling out of state. This designation also introduces more people to the lifestyle of boating. In Ohio, annual retail sales of new boats, engines, and marine accessories were \$352 million dollars in a recent study by the National Marine Manufacturers Association. Designating June as "Ohio Goes Boating Month" would help take the program to a higher level in 2018 and beyond.

Ohio Goes Boating Month offers a great opportunity to maximize the return on the investment that the State has already made to boating. This initiative keeps more recreational dollars here, gets more people involved in the boating lifestyle, and brings



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more tax revenue to the State. It's a definite win for the citizens, win for the state, and win for businesses involved in boating.

More than 14,000 Ohioans work in the recreational boating industry and an additional 5,000 work in supporting industries. As of 2012, the total annual economic impact of boating to the state of Ohio is \$3.6 billion. Of note, 95% of boats sold in the U.S. are also made in the U.S. Please see the enclosed economic impact study for additional information.

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Thank you for your consideration of this legislation, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.