



NATIONAL BOATING FEDERATION

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NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT-DAYTONA BEACH, FL

Ethanol Percentage Increase, Ruling by EPA

The EPA has indicated it is on track for a final decision on the E15 waiver this summer based on a new set of tests conducted on late model motor vehicles. The EPA may grant a “partial waiver” after completion of this limited testing (none on marine engines). This testing was not based on the original petition from Growth Energy and thus was not available for public comment. Thus NBF signed on to a group letter from a number of organizations to the EPA requesting it allow the public an opportunity to comment on any new findings prior to a final decision on E15. As stated in the letter: “We write to express our concern that EPA may decide to allow the introduction into commerce of mid-level ethanol blends such as E15, based on new information that was not available for public comment when the docket was open last year” Another round of public comment could slow down final approval of E15.

In the meantime a major fuel pump manufacturer, Dresser Wayne, has been approved by Underwriters Laboratories for fuel pumps that dispense ethanol blends up to 25%. The ethanol industry is vying to increase the number of blender pumps across the country.

Additionally according to Trade Only the Iowa state senate has introduced legislation that requires state gas stations to sell only ethanol blended fuel except for certain qualified vehicles, including boats and other non-road engines.

Ocean Policy Task Force Interim Recommendations

The President’s Council on Environmental Quality has published their interim report on ocean policy which has generated significant responses. The Task Force was charged with developing a national policy for conserving and managing ocean territories and the Great Lakes. Ten organizations provided a group response with extensive comments challenging the policies and objectives alluded to in the report. Among those were “In the absence of a clear policy statement in the Interim Report prioritizing recreation, we remain concerned that the proposed new layers of bureaucratic and new spatial planning in the marine environment will converge into vast areas eventually being closed off to recreational uses.” The term “spatial planning” and its many implications were questioned many times in the 13 page comment. In a separate comment from the MRAA it was stated “we see a real threat to recreational fishing and boating of some of the policy recommendations of the draft report.” All of the comments were well thought out and presented; generally citing the negative implications of a federal bureaucracy managing our oceans and Great Lakes and that more clarity is needed on how any new national oceans policy would impact boating and fishing.

No Discharge Zones – Increasing Declaration

In Florida, Maryland and New York, efforts are underway to declare certain waterways No Discharge Zones (NDZ). NOAA has proposed a ban on marine sanitation device discharges in

the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. NMMA responded to NOAA's initiative by stating it should be consistent with accepted standards for designating NDZs and not solely on the needs of one sanctuary. New York has petitioned the EPA to declare the states canal system, including 524 linear miles of waterways a NDZ. Legislation has been introduced in the Maryland Senate and House to declare the Chesapeake Bay a NDZ. The Senate and House bills were heard on 16 and 19 March with many groups, including CBYCA, providing oral testimony. The arguments for and against were numerous but the preponderance of testimony was in opposition.

H.R. 2548, Keep Americas Waterfront Working Act

This important legislation as reported in the NASBLA newsletter amends the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 to require establishment of a Working Waterfronts Grant program to be administered to by state agencies to promote and protect public access. These grants will allow states to determine which waterfronts are at risk and establish priorities for those needing protection. A hearing was conducted by the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife in which Rep. Pingree, the bills sponsor, testified "Developing a working waterways grant program is an important part of ensuring our coastal economy remains strong" and that the legislation is key in preserving our nation's marinas and its many boating opportunities.

A letter of support was sent from NBF to Rep. Pingree this past January. A recent check with Pingree's office indicates it is now waiting for a floor vote.

Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (Wallop/Breaux) Reauthorization

The Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (SFRBTF) which supports fishing, boating safety, the Clean Vessel Act and the BIG program, needed full reauthorization by Sept 30, 2009. Failing to achieve this, it has been maintained by a continuing resolution which is due to expire Dec 10, 2010. Senate Democratic leadership has recently indicated that as part of their jobs package, they will likely extend the highway program, which includes the Trust Fund, for one year. Normally the reauthorization is for five years and provides around \$700 million per year in tax revenue for all boating programs. It is not clear at this time how this will be finally resolved.