



Industry growth through Collaboration, Communication and Education

March 31, 2017

Chairman Michael Brady
Joint Committee on Revenue
State House Room 109E
Boston, MA 02133

Chairman Jay Kaufman
Joint Committee on Revenue
State House Room 34
Boston, MA 02133

Re: HB 1634 An Act relative to local control of boat excise revenue

Dear Chairmen Brady and Kaufman and Joint Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1634, An Act relative to local control of boat excise revenue. The Massachusetts Marine Trades Association (“MMTA”) **supports** the local choice for designation of funds collected locally from boaters through excise taxes. State waterways are in desperate need of adequate funding and each municipality should have the authority to use all the boat excise tax collected for this purpose, not just 50%, if they so choose.

Established in 1964, the MMTA is the statewide, non-profit, representative body for over 1,200 marine trades businesses in the Commonwealth. Our businesses employ over 27,000 men and women and generate over \$2.0 billion in direct and indirect annual economic activity for Massachusetts inland and on the coast. The mission of MMTA is to further the interests of the marine trades and the boating public through the promotion of boating, participation in legislation and professional improvement programs.

For decades, MMTA has observed, with dismay, the deterioration of marine infrastructure owned by the Commonwealth and its municipalities, and has worked to find public or private partnerships, or other means of funding safe infrastructure. The Commonwealth is in dire need of restoration and methodical attention to the waterways infrastructure or it will not only lose public and private property, but it will lose jobs associated with the infrastructure to other, neighboring states.

MMTA and the recreational marine industry contribute positively and significantly to the economic strength and quality of life enjoyed in Massachusetts. The ‘business of boating’ provides jobs, economic opportunity and public access to our precious waterways, improves aesthetics of inland and coastal waters and supports environmental stewardship while promoting

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a family-friendly form of recreation and tourism. With a history of 186,000 state and federally registered vessels and 1 million anglers in the Commonwealth and over 5 million residents living within 10 miles of the ocean, the marine infrastructure of the Commonwealth and its municipalities needs extensive repairs and a focused, systematic approach for doing so.

MMTA supports HB 1634, as it supported the same bill during the 2015-2016 legislative session. The bill provides additional capacity for reinvesting in our waterways, which is crucial. The work necessary to rebuild and maintain this infrastructure is constant and without proper funding and delegation of responsibility, the Commonwealth risks losing some of its most valuable assets for economic growth statewide. Job, recreation, and tourism, along with maritime industrial uses, require modern and safe infrastructure, which HB 1634 strives to promote and provide.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1634. MMTA's Government Relations and Legal Counsel, Jamy Buchanan Madeja is always available to discuss this and any other matter related to the business of boating. Please feel free to contact her at 617-227-8410 or jmadeja@buchananassociates.com.

Sincerely,

Paul Nowak

Paul Nowak, President
Massachusetts Marine Trades Association