
President Bush signs Clean Boating Act into law

In a significant victory for the recreational marine industry and the American boating and angling public, President Bush late yesterday signed into law S. 2766, the Clean Boating Act of 2008, protecting the more than 17 million recreational boats throughout the U.S. from unprecedented and unnecessary federal regulations. Congress passed the Clean Boating Act on July 22, 2008.

"The recreational marine industry and boaters throughout the U.S. can now rest easy and go boating without a federal or state permit, heavy penalties and absurd legal jeopardy," said Scott Gudes, NMMA vice president of Government Relations. "We applaud President Bush and Congress for their bipartisan efforts to reverse the unintended and potentially devastating consequences of an overbroad federal court decision."

Introduced by Senators Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) and Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) and Representatives Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio) and Candice Miller (R-Mich.), the Clean Boating Act permanently and fully restores a commonsense regulation that excludes recreational boaters and anglers from the Clean Water Act federal and state permitting system designed for land-based industrial facilities, like sewage treatment plants. Without legislative relief, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was set to implement new permitting regulations for boaters by October 1, 2008.

"This is welcome news for all recreational marine manufacturers across the country," said Thom Dammrich, NMMA president. "NMMA raised the alarm on this misguided court decision nearly two years ago, and we are thrilled that Congress and the President have prevented the bureaucratic nightmare that was set to become law."

"NMMA thanks all of its partners in the Boat Blue Coalition, including BoatU.S.," added Gudes. "Passage of this legislation is a testament to what is possible when our community joins forces and speaks with one voice before key decision-makers."