



Connecticut Harbor Management Association

December 14, 2011

State Senator Edward Meyer
Assistant Majority Leader
Legislative Office Building
Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Dear Senator Meyer:

On behalf of the Connecticut Harbor Management Association, I wish to express our sincere gratitude for your participation at the 16th Annual CHMA Dinner Meeting. Your keynote presentation "**Harbors and Economic Renaissance**" helped us all focus on the important role and future direction that Connecticut needs to take to ensure the economic growth of our ports and harbors. Your remarks concerning the importance of cooperation among municipal harbor management commissions and state and federal agencies were especially timely and significant contributions to the overall theme and tenor of the meeting. I think it was important for local commissions and harbor masters to understand how the Environment Committee views its mission for managing Connecticut's valuable coastal and marine resources.

Our goal was to focus attention on critical issues that affect our ports and harbors and to share with you our proposed initiatives for addressing those issues. More than eighty people including city, state and federal officials were in attendance with a common purpose to advance the public's interest in achieving safe, beneficial, and environmentally sound use of Connecticut's ports and harbors.

The Association hopes to continue its dialogue with you and requests the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our proposed action items and initiatives in greater detail. I have taken the liberty to enclose a synopsis of the critical issues that we feel require legislative consideration. I look forward to calling you after the holidays to discuss how we may best proceed.

Thank you for your dedication and guidance to help revitalize both economically and environmentally, our marine resources.

Sincerely yours,

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Cc: Connecticut Harbor Management Association Board of Directors



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RECOMMENDED HARBOR MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES AND ACTION ITEMS FOR 2012

The following recommended priorities and action items have been developed by the Connecticut Harbor Management Association (CHMA) in an effort to enhance local management of Connecticut's harbors in accordance with the legislative intent of the Connecticut Harbor Management Act of 1984 (P.A. 84-287), and to otherwise advance the goals of continued safe, beneficial and environmentally sound use of all Connecticut harbors and navigable waterways. Portions of these recommendations have also been submitted by the CHMA to the Long Island Sound Assembly for inclusion in its 2011 Annual Report to the Connecticut General Assembly. In addition, the CHMA submitted some of these recommendations to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Office of Long Island Sound Programs (DEEP OLISP) in the course of the CHMA's review of OLISP's "Updated Assessment and Strategy of the Connecticut Coastal Management Program."

Priority areas of focus involve: 1) enhancing the Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA); 2) enhancing the Connecticut Harbor Management Act; 3) improving the maintenance dredging process for Connecticut ports and harbors; 4) strengthening the State Harbor Master program; and 5) restoring the use of boat registration funds to support harbor management initiatives.

Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA)

- The General Assembly should reaffirm the original intent of the CCMA to promote both environmental conservation and economic development of the Connecticut coast.
- The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection should direct the DEEP OLISP to pursue a new strategy for implementing Connecticut's Coastal Management Program that: a) promotes both environmental conservation and economic development; and b) is based on both facilitative and regulatory approaches intended to advance the legislative goals and policies of the CCMA.

Connecticut Harbor Management Act

- The General Assembly should consider an amendment to the Connecticut Harbor Management Act strengthening and clarifying the authority of municipal harbor management commissions when reviewing proposals requiring State approvals, recognizing: a) that such review is for the purpose of determining the consistency of those proposals with any duly approved and adopted harbor management plan for the affected municipality; and b) that recommendations of a harbor management commission pursuant to the harbor management plan are binding on any official of the state making decisions affecting the mu-

municipality's harbor management jurisdiction unless that official shows cause to the contrary.

Maintenance dredging of Connecticut ports and harbors

- The DEEP OLISP should develop and implement active planning strategies to achieve timely, economical, and environmentally sound maintenance dredging of Connecticut ports and harbors. In this regard, the DEEP OLISP must recognize that there is no inherent conflict of interest in pursuing a Coastal Management Program implementation strategy that involves, concurrently: a) facilitating federal dredging projects through planning and other initiatives undertaken in coordination with the Corps of Engineers and local sponsors; and b) reviewing federal maintenance dredging proposals for consistency with the Coastal Management Program and issuing the state approvals needed to undertake the planned projects.
- The DEEP OLISP should pursue initiatives to help ensure timely implementation of the Comprehensive Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) for Long Island Sound now being prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Those initiatives should be pursued concurrently with preparation of the DMMP and include:
 - continued development of coastal management coordination with New York State as envisioned by the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act with respect to states sharing jurisdiction in a coastal water body; and
 - development and implementation of plans that will achieve feasible methods of dredged material disposal now being identified in the DMMP.

State Harbor Master Program

- The General Assembly should consider legislation to strengthen the Harbor Master Program by updating sections of the General Statutes that concern harbor master authorities and responsibilities where appropriate.
- Following the General Assembly's re-evaluation of the Harbor Master Program, the Commissioner of Transportation in consultation with the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection should identify specific opportunities for program enhancement and implementation that include, but are not limited to, opportunities for improved harbor master training and education with regard to maintaining public safety and implementing municipal harbor management plans.

Re-instatement of apportionment of State boat registration fees to municipalities

- The General Assembly should consider legislation to restore the annual distribution of boat registration fees historically provided by the State to the individual towns in lieu of local 1978 property taxes, in an amount adjusted to reflect existing local conditions that include the amount of revenue generated by each municipality's registered vessels, and the municipality's responsibility for implementing its harbor management plan.

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