Appendix VIII – Boating Task Force Interim Report

JOHN C ASTLE
30th Legislative District

Finance Committee Vice Chairman

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The Senate of Maryland

November 5, 2007

Governor Martin J O'Malley
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Thomas V Mike Miller, Jr
President, Maryland Senate
State House, H-107
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Michael E Busch
Speaker, Maryland House of Delegates
State House, H-101
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Gentlemen

This is in regard to the Task Force to Study the Boating Industry in Maryland that was established during the 2007 Legislative Session The purpose of the Task Force is to make recommendations on how to expand and develop the boating industry in Maryland As Chairman of this Task Force, I wanted to provide you with the current status of the Task Force as well as some actions that I plan to take that will improve the outcome of this endeavor

The members of the Task Force were notified of their appointments by letter from the Governor dated September 25, 2007 The first meeting was held on October 9th that included introductions of the members and an overview of the responsibilities of the Task Force In addition, there was an extensive discussion regarding a variety of concerns raised by the boating industry including, among others, the need to maintain and improve boating access, preserve and improve waterways, market Maryland as a boating destination, examine vessel excise tax and regulatory permit issues, assess competition from neighboring states, explore methods to market Maryland to boating manufacturers and other matters that would help the State's boating industry expand and prosper

The Task Force is to provide a preliminary report to you by November 30, 2007, with a final report to the Governor and Maryland General Assembly on June 30, 2008 In light of the late appointment of the Task Force members, the time commitment associated with the Special Legislative Session and the expansive scope of work assigned to this group, I would like this letter to be considered as the preliminary report for the Task Force Although no meeting date is scheduled at this time, the Task Force may meet in December to assign various research items that the members may begin to work on during the time when the Task Force does not plan to meet Accordingly, the Task Force will resume meeting following the 2008 Regular Legislative Session to discuss the results of the research

As for the final report, I will be introducing legislation in the regular session to amend the due date for the final report to December 31, 2008 This will provide sufficient time for the Task Force to complete its charge and prepare the final document

Again, I appreciate your support for this Task Force Please contact me at (410) 841-3578 or email at john astle@senate state md us if you have any further questions

Sincerely,

John C Astle

cc Task Force Members

MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
John R. Griffin, Secretary
Eric Schwaab, Deputy Secretary

January 8, 2008

The Honorable John C. Astle
Maryland State Senate
James Senate Office Building, Room 123
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Senator Astle:

Thank you for your letter to Governor Martin O'Malley regarding the status of the Task Force to Study the Boating Industry in Maryland that was established during the 2007 Legislative Session. The Governor has received your letter and asked me to respond on his behalf. I am glad to see that the Task Force members have been appointed and that the first meeting was a success. It is also evident that the responsibilities of the Task Force are extensive and will require considerable effort to address the many issues that impact the growth of Maryland's boating industry.

With respect to the preliminary report that was due to the Governor and the General Assembly by November 30, 2007, I certainly understand that the delayed appointments of the Task Force members, as well as the Special Legislative Session, had an impact on your ability to prepare this report. In that your initial meeting with the Task Force was very productive and included considerable interaction on a multitude of issues impacting the boating industry, I will consider your recent letter as satisfying the requirement for the preliminary report. As for your proposal to include legislation in the upcoming regular session to amend the due date for the final report to December 31, 2008, I would agree that this would be prudent given that the charge of the Task Force is so far-reaching.

Thank you again for your letter. The Governor appreciates hearing from you and, on his behalf; I also thank you for your commitment to this Task Force. If I may be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at 410-260-8100 or Mr. Robert Gaudette, Director of Boating Services, at 410-260-8462, toll free 877-620-8367, extension 8462, or email bgaudette@dnr.state.md.us. He will be pleased to assist you.

Sincerely,

John R. Griffin
Secretary

cc: Robert Gaudette, DNR

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