

March 02, 2022

Senator Carrie Ruud
Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance Committee
95 University Avenue W
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3233
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for SF3392 by Recreational Boating & Fishing Community

Dear Chair Ruud, Vice Chair Weber, Ranking Member Hawj and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of leaders in the recreational boating and fishing community, the undersigned organizations respectfully request your support for SF3392 – establishing a mandatory recreational boating safety education program in Minnesota.

Boating and fishing is vital to our way of life in our great state, as many Minnesotans enjoy our 11,842 lakes and many rivers. In Minnesota, we have over 825,000 registered boats and about 1.4 million licensed anglers. It's no wonder that boating and fishing are the top economic driver in the outdoor sector according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis 2020 Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account data.

As we continue to see growth in boating and fishing, we believe it is our responsibility to look out for our community and establish safety standards and procedures so that everyone can enjoy the waters in a responsible manner for years to come. As outdoor recreation is at an all time high, the time is now to implement boater education to ensure operators are safe on the water and we continue to be the best stewards of the resource.

The majority of states require some form of boater education, and while Minnesota requires an operator safety education course for every other motorized recreational product, it does not require such a course for boating. It is our collective priority to expand access to and participation in a boater education programs through online accessible coursework and in person opportunities.

We urge the committee to support this bill as it establishes:

- An accessible education course with national recognition and reciprocity for users.
- A proven way to dramatically improve boater safety on the water.
- An opportunity deliver key messages tailored for boaters using our many lakes and rivers.
- Creates further awareness on the threat of aquatic invasive species.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with you on improving boater safety in the days ahead. If you have any questions please contact Jill Sims at the National Marine Manufacturers Association (612-961-2220 or jsims@nmma.org) or Chad Tokowicz at the Marine Retailers Association of the Americas (978-569-5127 or chad@mraa.com).

Sincerely,

Absolute Outdoor of America, LLC

BoatUS

CD3 Systems

Hannay's Inc

MarineMax Bayport

MarineMax Excelsior

MarineMax Rodgers

Marine Retailers Association of the Americas

Metro Area Marine Dealers

Midwest Marine Association

Midwest Water Sports

MN-Fish Sportfishing Coalition

National Marine Manufacturers Association

Nisswa Marine

North Central Marine Association

Port of Sunnyside Club, Inc.

River Valley Marine

Water Sports Industry Association

Wildlife Forever