



# Yacht Clubs of Maryland ...to provide a means for close and frequent interaction and mutual support among member Yacht Clubs...

February 7, 2024

## MEMBER CLUBS

**BALTIMORE YACHT CLUB**  
BALTIMORE

**BELVIDERE YACHT CLUB**  
ARNOLD

**BODKIN YACHT CLUB**  
PASADENA

**BOUMI SHRINE YACHT CLUB**

**BOWLEYS POINT YACHT CLUB**  
BALTIMORE

**BUSH RIVER YACHT CLUB**  
ABINGDON

**CHESAPEAKE COMMODORES CLUB**

**CLASSIC YACHT CLUB**

**CRESCENT YACHT CLUB**  
BALTIMORE

**EASTERN YACHT CLUB**  
BALTIMORE

**GALLOWAY YACHT CLUB**  
Baltimore

**GOOSE HARBOR YACHT CLUB**  
CHASE

**GREAT OAK YACHT CLUB**  
CHESTERTOWN

**KENT ISLAND YACHT CLUB**  
CHESTER

**MARLEY BOAT CLUB**  
PASADENA

**MARYLAND YACHT CLUB**  
PASADENA

**MIDDLE RIVER YACHT CLUB**  
BALTIMORE

**MILES RIVER YACHT CLUB**  
ST. MICHAELS

**NEPTUNE YACHT CLUB**  
BALTIMORE

**NORTH EAST RIVER YACHT CLUB**  
NORTH EAST

**NORTH POINT YACHT CLUB**  
SPARROWS POINT

**OTTER POINT YACHT CLUB**  
ABINGDON

**PLEASANT YACHT CLUB**  
SPARROWS POINT

**RED BYE YACHT CLUB**  
BALTIMORE

**RIVERSIDE YACHT CLUB**  
BALTIMORE

**SUE HAVEN YACHT CLUB**  
BALTIMORE

**VENTNOR YACHT CLUB**  
PASADENA

**VETERANS YACHT CLUB ASSOCIATION**

## Testimony to the Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee (By Request – Departmental – Natural Resources (DNR))

**Why we OPPOSE HB 239:** The proposed fee increases are excessive and unreasonable, place DNR costs entirely on boaters despite benefits to the state and many others, and promote perception Maryland is unfriendly to boats and boaters

- ✓ Boaters understand the need for a **REASONABLE** fee increase given fees have remained low for decades. **Increases in the hundreds of percent are unacceptable and unjustified.**
- ✓ Although we would welcome amendments to reduce the fees in this bill, **we can support no amendment or fee increases that varies rates based on size of the vessel.**
- ✓ **Data shows small boats cause more demand on DNR resources especially police.** Coast Guard data shows more drownings occur from small boats. Drownings from large boats are rare.
- ✓ Bigger boats do not mean the owners can or should pay more. **There are small boats loaded to the gills with electronics and 3 or more engines that cost more than many houses.**
- ✓ Fees should correlate to services provided such as titling registration expenses. Boaters already pay the full Maryland tax on every gallon of gasoline, which doesn't provide any direct benefits to boaters.
- ✓ **Proposed renewal fees do not compare well with nearby states.** Examples: VA \$32-\$50 for 3 years; PA \$26-\$52 for 2 years.
- ✓ Proposed graduated registration fees are unfair to people of modest means who happen to own large older boats of relatively low market value.
- ✓ The State and its citizens benefit from a \$3.5 billion boating industry, commercial fishing, tourism, and thousands of full-time jobs.
- ✓ Fees at this level enhance the **perception that boating is unaffordable** to the average person and will have negative effects on this vital Maryland industry.
- ✓ Fees at this level enhance the **perception Maryland is a high tax and fee state** to be avoided if you can live in or keep a boat in another state.
- ✓ Such high fees add to the incentives for retirees with boats to leave Maryland.
- ✓ Fees at this level **discourage multiple boat owners** who are among the most **active** in the industry. The pursuit of multiple forms of water recreation (e.g. fishing, sailing, cruising, water skiing, trailering, lake boating, classic boat restoration & shows, etc.) supports the MD economy.

Sincerely,

Rickey Pope  
Commodore, Yacht Clubs of Maryland