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**Jessica Shrader**

Tri-City Medical Center

**Rick Wright**

MainStreet Oceanside

July 20, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom

State Capitol

Office of the Governor

Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Proposed CARB Commercial Harborcraft Regulations/Sportfishing Boat Engine Regulations

Dear Governor Newsom,

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, recreational fishing contributed \$5.6 billion annually in economic activity, supporting nearly 40,000 California jobs. Sportfishing and whale watching businesses are also a major contributor to Oceanside's economy, drawing tourists from all over the world, supporting local jobs and generating tax revenue for public services.

The sportfishing industry embraces the need to reduce engine emissions, securing air quality grants over the years to upgrade vessels with cleaner burning engines. However, the Oceanside Chamber of Commerce believes harborcraft engine regulations recently proposed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) place an undue burden on family-owned boating operations.

The California State Maritime Academy concluded in a report commissioned by CARB that the proposed emission standards cannot be achieved because Tier Four engines do not exist for use on harborcraft vessels. Furthermore, the size and weight of the proposed diesel particulate filters (DPFs) would make sportfishing vessels unstable, posing significant safety concerns for passengers and crew. Operational issues with the DPFs could result in unexpected equipment failure when the boats are out at sea with passengers. Rather than trying to find a reasonable alternative afforded to other vessel categories, CARB responded by stating that boat operators should purchase new vessels when it is not possible to reconstruct boat hulls to accommodate the new engines and DPFs.

As a result, in just 18 short months from when the regulations are scheduled to be implemented later this year, the vast majority of sportfishing and whale watching vessels will have to be taken out of service as vessels made of wood and fiberglass cannot be modified as steel hulls can. Vessels that can be modified will incur a significant cost for retrofit and will be faced with the potential safety issues noted above.

Unfortunately, for many boat owners, the option of financing new boats is not possible when existing boats will have little to no resale value once deemed noncompliant in California. To further impact boat owner's ability to do business, passenger loads will have to be reduced by over 40 percent to account for the engine modifications that are greater in size and weight.

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Consequently, the proposed regulations force boat owners into an unattainable position. They cannot afford to purchase new vessels and reconstructed vessels are too expensive to operate with reduced passenger loads, resulting in fewer ticket sales and lower revenue. As a result, the industry strongly believes that the State will run many boat owners out of business within 3-6 years after the new regulations are implemented.

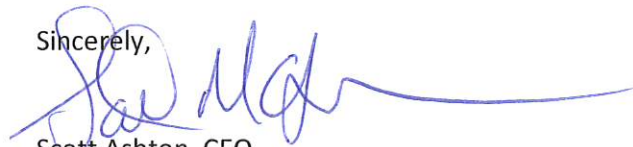
Boat owners also have serious reservations about a host of unresolved safety concerns that extend beyond the stability of reconstructed boat hulls. Engines equipped with DPFs have not been thoroughly tested at sea. It is common for DPFs used on farm equipment and trucks to experience blockage, creating significant heat and severe back pressure on engines, sometimes taking hours to clear exhaust systems and restart engines. While this circumstance is manageable on land, under the best-case scenario, passengers could be adrift at sea for hours as boat crews try to recover the system. The more likely scenario will result in sea rescues due to engine failure. In a surprising omission, CARB has not solicited the input of the United States Coast Guard which regulates the safety of commercial passenger vessels.

As a community, we share the State's desire to reduce engine emissions, however, the regulations as drafted will adversely affect sportfishing and whale watching businesses, and communities economically dependent on a strong and vibrant hospitality and tourism industry. This is why we believe the proposed regulations will undermine your economic plan that aims to rebuild California's economy and [recover 1.2 million tourism and hospitality jobs lost](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the aforementioned reasons, we encourage your Administration to work with the sportfishing industry to develop air quality regulations that are economically feasible, take into account existing technology and not putting the safety of passengers and crew at risk.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Scott Ashton, CEO  
Oceanside Chamber of Commerce

CC: Ms. Liane Randolph, Chair  
c/o Harborcraft  
California Air Resources Board  
1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

State Senator Patricia Bates  
Assembly Member Tasha Boerner Horvath  
Oceanside City Council