



April 20, 2020

The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor  
Office of the Governor, State of Washington  
P.O. Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

RE: Asking that you consider early re-opening of recreational boating and fishing – family-friendly activities that can be practiced with responsible social distancing

Dear Governor Inslee:

We come together as organizations that support recreational boating and fishing, first to thank you for the efforts your office has made to keep Washingtonians healthy during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic --- and to “flatten the curve” as we fight this outbreak with a ‘Stay Home, Stay Healthy’ order. We appreciate the leadership you and your office have shown and the approach you’ve laid out to restart activities by gradually “turning a dial” rather than instantly “flipping a switch.”

With that said, as you consider early rollouts of activities that can be performed safely and that can still maintain social distancing and other healthy standards, we strongly recommend a reopening of recreational boating and fishing. These two outings are positive outlets for our families and allow people to spend time together enjoying the natural wonders and beautiful waterways of the Evergreen State. In our view, boating and fishing are a perfect antidote to COVID-19.

We have used the past 1½ months to hone a series of social-distancing guidelines and practices. Looking to our national partners and adopting measures that are appropriate for our state, the path forward helps ensure recreational boaters and anglers will put their vessels and rods back in the water in a way that is safe and responsible. Marinas and marine businesses have put together an array of steps that ensure social distancing and safety are paramount, from what to pack to how to navigate a boat ramp to limits on slip space to advice for what to do on the water to guidelines on best practices once you return to the dock.

At the same time, marine businesses have published a listing of 29 tips for how to sell and service boats safely, covering everything from ways to eliminate physical contact between customers to virtual communications strategies to appointment request forms on websites to specially designated drop-off and pickup areas that are separated from one another.

We are extremely proud that recreational boating and fishing are historically family-friendly and safe activities that can be passed down from parents to children, that teach us to appreciate and steward our marine environment, and that combine together to generate some \$7 billion on a yearly basis for the Washington economy – with family-wage, clean jobs spread across every corner of our state.

On behalf of the state’s recreational boating and fishing sectors, we respectfully request you consider your self-professed love of the water and make recreational boating and fishing safe and social-distancing-friendly initial “turns of the dial” in Washington. You have our joint commitment that as recreational boating and fishing are brought back as outdoor recreation choices for Washingtonians, it will be done in a safe way, with best practices, and with social distancing and public health foremost in mind.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of our collective request.

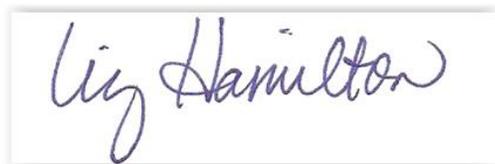
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Harris", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

George Harris, NMTA President/CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Wise", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Bob Wise, Recreational Boating Association of WA President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Liz Hamilton", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Liz Hamilton, Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association Exec Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nello Picinich", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Nello Picinich, Coastal Conservation Assoc Executive Director

Handwritten signature of Christopher M. Edmonston in blue ink, enclosed in a light gray rectangular box.

Christopher Edmonston, BoatU.S. Government Affairs Vice President

Handwritten signature of Curt Smitch in black ink, enclosed in a light gray rectangular box.

Curt Smitch, Fish Northwest President

Handwritten signature of Scott Weedman in black ink, enclosed in a light gray rectangular box.

Scott Weedman, Salmon for the Future President

Handwritten signature of Y. Nicole Vasilaros in black ink, enclosed in a light gray rectangular box.

Nicole Vasilaros, National Marine Manufactures Association Sr. Vice President