



RBOC

Protecting your boating interests.

925 L Street • Suite 260

Sacramento CA 95814

www.rbo.org

FALL 2022

BOATER BRIEF

RBOC Advocating for the Best Use of Boater Taxes & Fees

RBOC supports the dedication of boater fees and taxes for programs and services that directly benefit boaters.

We therefore appreciate the decision made by the Governor and Legislature with the state budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 to refrain from significantly increasing boat registration fees and convening a stakeholder process.

This public process of engagement has been underway for the past several months, with three subcommittees led by Boating and Waterways Commissioners and supported by the expert staff of the Division of Boating and Waterways. A wide variety of boating community stakeholders are actively participating.

This process is providing the opportunity for all interested parties and the state to review the expenditure of more than \$100 million each year in fuel tax dollars attributable to boats, the most effective and efficient use of those funds, to identify approaches for increasing the small percentage of those monies currently directed to boating programs, and to enhance the financial participation of non-boaters who benefit from the current and future programs.

RBOC is encouraged with the progress being made and the consideration that is being given to the suggestions made by the boating community in our July 14 letter [click here] and in the input being provided by organizations and individuals throughout the subcommittee discussions.

The full commission may consider finalization of its recommendations at its November meeting. The commission's input will inform the Division of Boating and Waterways and the Department of Parks and Recreation as a report is prepared for submission to the Legislature.

Governor Vetoes New Program for Abandoned and Derelict Commercial Vessels

The Governor vetoed SB 1065 [Eggman] on September 28 with the following message:

"To the Members of the California State Senate: I am returning Senate Bill 1065 without my signature.

"This bill would establish the California Abandoned and Derelict Commercial Vessel Program and a multi-agency task force to identify, prioritize, and fund the removal of abandoned and derelict commercial vessels across the state.

"While I support the author's attempt to create a statewide approach to address abandoned and derelict commercial vessels in California that pose significant public health, safety, and environmental risks, this program



was not accounted for in the budget. Implementation across the relevant agencies is expected to cost about \$25 million in year 1 with ongoing general fund impacts.

"With our state facing lower-than-expected revenues over the first few months of this fiscal year, it is important to remain disciplined when it comes to spending, particularly spending that is ongoing. We must prioritize existing obligations and priorities, including education, health care, public safety and safety-net programs.

"The Legislature sent measures with potential costs of well over \$20 billion in onetime spending commitments and more than \$10 billion in ongoing commitments not accounted for in the state budget. Bills with significant fiscal impact, such as this measure, should be considered and accounted for as part of the annual budget process. For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill."

RBOC appreciates the provision Senator Eggman added to SB 1065 as it was being considered in the legislature to clarify that the proposed new program would not negatively impact the landmark, boater-funded, effective state program managed by the

Division of Boating and Waterways to reimburse local governments when they accept a recreational vessel in lieu of abandonment or remove an abandoned or derelict recreational vessel from their waterways.

Governor Signs Legislation Exempting Lifeguard Rescue Vessels from Speed Limits

Governor Newsom has signed into law the RBOC-supported AB 1682 [Boerner Horvath and Ward] to ensure that clearly identifiable lifeguard rescue vessels engaged in public safety activities are not subject to the speed limit imposed on machine-propelled vessels.

As explained by the author: *“Currently, California has a 5 mph limit for watercraft within 100 feet of swimmers and 200 feet of beaches. Since most rescues take place within 200 feet of the beach, slower boat speeds during an emergency reduces the lifeguards’ ability to use their skills and training to save lives. AB 1682 would provide an exemption to clearly identifiable public water rescue vessels from the existing 5 mph speed limit if engaged in open water rescue operations. The goal of the bill is to keep beachgoers, whether on the beach or in the ocean, safe.”*

Boating and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta

RBOC opposes the California WaterFix and previous incarnations of proposals that, even as revised to one tunnel, would still significantly impede navigation and harm Delta recreation. Instead, efforts should be made to provide additional water storage capacity.

Our Delta Committee is reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Report that was issued in July, to prepare Comments to the Delta Conveyance Report prior to a December 16 deadline.



RBOC Supports City of Newport Beach Dredging Application

RBOC in September expressed its support for the Coastal Development Permit Application No. 5-21-0640 submitted by the City of Newport Beach. RBOC supports the Application for several reasons including:

- The application and project are in furtherance of the basic goal of the Coastal Act to maximize public access and recreational use of coastal areas.
- Lower Newport Bay requires periodic maintenance dredging to remove sediment that accumulates over time and impedes navigation and full use of the Harbor.
- The application provides a plan for the construction and monitoring framework for the disposal of the dredged material including best management practices and both short- and long-term monitoring activities.

Timely approval of the application will help keep this important project on track and hopefully enable the US Army Corps of Engineers to start dredging this fall.

Outdoor Recreation & Preservation of Water

RBOC supports the expansion of sustainable outdoor recreation, the preservation of ocean and inland waterways, and the promotion of the economic development and job growth that can occur in this sector.

As these initiatives move forward through legislation and administrative actions including the 30x30 and Outdoors for All efforts, and baselines are established to measure our progress, it is essential to acknowledge the significant progress that California has already achieved, the tremendous value that on-the-water recreation provides to sustaining our mental and physical health, and the importance of measures that have considered and incorporate a variety of reasoned perspectives.

The Governor signed into law AB 30 [Kalra] that furthers this initiative by establishing the Equitable Outdoor Access Act to set forth the state’s commitment to ensuring all Californians can benefit from, and have meaningful and sustainable access to, the state’s rich cultural and natural resources.

Please Contribute

Your contribution helps RBOC continue our professional advocacy and grassroots efforts that ensures we are able to continue to enjoy boating. Please contribute \$20 or more and become a Friend of RBOC at www.RBOC.org.

Please note that, due to RBOC’s extensive lobbying activities, contributions to our nonprofit advocacy organization are not tax deductible.

