

August 31, 2026

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), we write to express our support for the underlying principles guiding H.R.9436, the *Northeast Lobsterman Protection Act of 2026*. The promulgation of balanced regulations often requires significant time and resources to collect and evaluate best available science and data; appropriately consider technology and innovation as a solution; and conduct accurate cost-benefit analysis. Marine manufacturers believe healthy marine wildlife populations can be achieved and maintained in partnership with domestic manufacturers, small businesses, and coastal economies that depend upon access to our public waterways.

NMMA is the leading recreational marine trade association in North America, representing more than 1,300 manufacturers of boats, engines, trailers, and marine accessories. Recreational boating has a \$230 billion economic impact, supporting more than 812,000 jobs and 36,000 businesses across the country. Further, recreational boat building is a uniquely American industry, with 95 percent of boats sold in the U.S. made in the U.S. Recreational boat manufacturers, lobster boat builders, commercial vessel operators, and repair yards often rely on the same supply chains, skilled workforce, and small businesses that sustain coastal economies throughout the Northeast and across the nation. Maintaining the competitiveness of these industries while advancing meaningful conservation outcomes is a shared objective.

NMMA supports Congress encouraging a regulatory approach at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) that is grounded in statutory authority and implemented based on the best available science, transparent risk assessments, and comprehensive cost-benefit analysis. Effective conservation depends on accurately identifying risk, directing resources where they will achieve the greatest benefit, and ensuring that management measures are informed by current data and evolving scientific understanding and advancements. As a result, NMMA has long encouraged federal partners to embrace collaboration, innovative technologies and adaptive management tools that can improve conservation outcomes while minimizing unnecessary economic disruption. Boatbuilders, engine manufacturers, and accessory makers recognize the harm of regulatory overreach from their own experiences with the North Atlantic right whale (NARW) speed restrictions.

We strongly support programs administered through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and believe that continued investment in research, technology development, and real-time management solutions is essential to achieving species recovery and supporting maritime commerce. These investments provide practical pathways to improve conservation outcomes while fostering cooperation among federal agencies, industry, conservation organizations, and coastal communities. Advancements in monitoring, detection systems, acoustic technologies, vessel tracking, and other dynamic management approaches enhance whale protection and provide NOAA program managers with more precise tools for risk reduction.

We appreciate your leadership and look forward to working with Congress, NOAA Fisheries, and other stakeholders to support modern solutions that protect the NARW while preserving the livelihoods of workers, our nation's coastal heritage, and businesses that depend on access to our nation's waterways.

Sincerely,



Robyn Boerstling, Senior Vice President and Chief Advocacy Officer



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