

Ohio Marine Trades Association  
and Government Advantage Group

# LEGISLATIVE REPORT

AUGUST 2024



## Cleveland Sailing Center Planned

The City of Cleveland recently announced plans for a community sailing center. This multipurpose facility will introduce many in Cleveland and the surrounding areas to the joys of the water. You can read more about the plan [here](#).

## ODNR Before the Sunset Review Committee

Every few years, there is a Sunset Review Committee formed to review all Ohio boards and commissions. The committee reviews these bodies and make recommendations as to if these boards still serve a purpose or should be sunset. Recently, the committee met to review many under ODNR's purview, including the Waterways Safety Council. All documents submitted to the committee can be viewed [here](#). OMTA is pleased to note that ODNR has recommended that the Waterways Safety Council be renewed. OMTA President Michelle Burke currently serves on this Council. Other bodies being reviewed under ODNR include all 15 wild, scenic, or recreational river area advisory councils and the Wildlife Council

The Lake Erie Commission also went before the Committee at the same meeting at ODNR. Those submitted documents can also be found in the [provided link](#).

## Water Safety Legislation

A bill was introduced recently that would require students to receive education in water safety. Under [House Bill 659](#), water safety means: "age-appropriate education intended to promote safety in, on, and around bodies of water and reduce the risk of injury or drowning". This educational information would be provided to students, via their parents, upon initial enrollment to the school.

## ODNR Finalizing Plans for Leasing Funds

The [Ohio Controlling Board](#) recently had on their agenda a request from ODNR to: establish appropriation authority in the amount of \$20,000,000 in fund 5BJ1, ALI 7256A6 (State Park Land Royalties) in FY 2025 for construction and renovation projects at Salt Fork State Park using revenue from oil and gas leases. ODNR is receiving these funds for leasing the state land's oil and gas mineral rights. The \$20 million is roughly 1/3 of the funds ODNR has collected so far from the leasing agreements from bonuses. The state will also receive royalty payments under the agreements. Leases were awarded in February and you can read more about that [here](#). The Controlling Board request was ultimately withdrawn but is expected to be before that body again soon.

## Senate Boating Event Makes Splash

Thanks to the generosity of our members, we were able to host 9 members of the Senate Republican caucus on a boat cruise to Put-in-Bay for a fundraising event. Launching from the Port Clinton Yacht Club on a picture-perfect, sunny day, attendees enjoyed 2 hours on the water. Participants got to see Middle Bass Island harbor, the state docks at Put-in-Bay, Gibraltar Island, and West Harbor. Some got to see an algae bloom firsthand, and some spotted a bald eagle! We really got to highlight the importance and diversity of what Lake Erie boating has to offer. After the cruise members were invited to attend a reception at Mojito Bay.

This day wouldn't have been possible without our friends at Clemons Boats, Catawba Moorings, Manitowoc Marine, Pier 53, and South Shore Marine

The Boat Ohio PAC is an important part of OMTA's advocacy efforts, and this Lake Erie event was a great way to provide support for key Ohio lawmakers. There really is no better way to experience the water than on a boat!

## **ODNR Wildlife Rules**

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Division of Wildlife has circulated rules for public comment. These are rules regarding commercial fishing and the use of fishing nets in Lake Erie. The Division is not considering any changes to these rules, but if you believe changes are warranted, stakeholders were permitted to submit initial comments until August 23rd. The rules can be found using this [link](#).