



Margaret Bonds Podlich  
President

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The Honorable Rick Scott, Governor  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

March 15, 2016

Dear Governor Scott,

On behalf of responsible recreational boaters throughout the United States, I ask you to veto House Bill 1051. This legislation would ban the overnight anchoring of boats in three specific areas of South Florida, providing special privileges to these select areas. As the nation's largest organization of recreational boaters, with over 540,000 active members nationwide and over 115,000 in Florida, BoatU.S. believes that creating special carve-outs directly counters the years of effort that have gone into developing rational statewide anchoring regulations .

For many boat owners one of the joys of boating is to travel to new places, drop anchor, dock or pick up a mooring and then spend time and money exploring the local community. Prior to 2009, boats cruising Florida faced a hodge-podge of inconsistent local anchoring rules that made boaters feel very unwelcome in some of the state's waters. We heard from many of our members who found communities whose ordinances banned or severely limited anchoring in their jurisdictions.

In 2009, legislation passed that limited the authority of local governments to enforce anchoring ordinances outside of designated mooring fields. In an effort to identify and hone what could be done to provide anchoring for active and responsible cruisers, while separating out and reducing the derelict boat problem, the legislation also created the **Florida Mooring and Anchoring Pilot Program** that allowed five local communities to develop local anchoring regulations. Administered by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission (FWC), the goals of the **Pilot Program** are to "*...encourage the establishment of additional public mooring fields and to develop and test policies and regulatory regimes that: (a) Promote the establishment and use of public mooring fields;(b) Promote public access to the waters of this state;(c) Enhance navigational safety;(d) Protect maritime infrastructure;(e) Protect the marine environment;(f) Deter improperly stored, abandoned, or derelict vessels.*"<sup>1</sup>

BoatU.S. actively supported the 2009 legislation and thereafter we worked with all five of the local jurisdictions as they developed their ordinances. We remain firmly convinced the Pilot Program can provide some elements that local governments might use to manage their waterways while still allowing a full range of mooring and anchoring options for active cruising boaters. In 2014, legislation extended the Pilot Program until July 1, 2017 and mandated FWC report on progress towards its stated goals. FWC is also slated to make recommendations for a statewide regulatory scheme for mooring and anchoring regulations that balances the interests of both waterfront communities and boaters.

Enactment of House Bill 1051 (with its provisions of special exceptions when it comes to overnight anchoring in three very specific areas of the state) is directly counter to all the time, effort and financial

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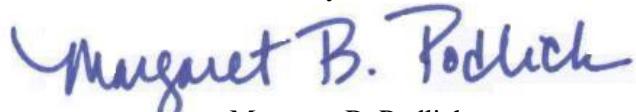
<sup>1</sup> Florida Statute 327.4105

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resources that have gone into creating anchoring rules that are fair to everyone. Local governments throughout the state have patiently waited for a balanced approach, one that will emerge in 2017 from the Pilot Program results.

We encourage you to veto House Bill 1051, which singles out just a few locations, and allow Florida to realize the benefits of seven years of investment made by the state, local governments and responsible boat owners. BoatU.S. stands ready to work for real solutions to help manage Florida's waters.

Sincerely,



Margaret B. Podlich  
President