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Founded in 1964

## House committee approves Clean Boating Act

Trade Only Today, Melanie Winters

The National Marine Manufacturers Association applauded the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee this week for approving the Clean Boating Act, paving the way for consideration by the House of Representatives.

“What’s pretty significant is that in a Congress that’s been so partisan, we have bipartisan support for boating,” Scott Gudes, NMMA vice president of government relations, said this morning.

The Clean Boating Act of 2008, H.R. 5949, would fully and permanently restore a longstanding regulation that excludes recreational boaters and anglers from the federal and state permitting requirements under the Clean Water Act designed for land-based industrial facilities and ocean-going commercial ships. This exemption was overturned by a federal court in 2006 in a case focused exclusively on ballast water from commercial vessels.

Gudes says the legislation is a “good government solution to a looming administrative and legal crisis for boaters across America.”

The House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, chaired by U.S. Rep. James Oberstar, D-Minn., approved H.R. 5949 this week by voice vote. The bill will now go before the full House for a vote.

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“Congress’ work is far from over,” said Gudes. “We now strongly urge the full House and the United States Senate — where identical legislation has 33 bipartisan sponsors — to quickly pass this legislation and send it to the President for signature into law well in advance of the September 2008 permitting deadline.”

H.R. 5949 is identical to S. 2766, Senate legislation introduced by Senators Bill Nelson, D-Fla., and Barbara Boxer, D-Calif. S. 2766 is pending before the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee, chaired by Boxer.

Gudes said the House intends to wait for the Senate to move forward with its version of the bill; it’s hoped the Senate committee will take up S. 2766 next week.

Gudes said the industry needs to keep up the pressure to get the bill through Congress and signed by the president before September.

“We have to get them to understand we’re up against a ticking clock,” he said.

## **NMMA applauds Senate committee move on Clean Boating Act**

The National Marine Manufacturers Association today praised the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee for unanimously approving the Clean Boating Act of 2008.

Since its introduction in March, the Clean Boating Act has accumulated 34 bipartisan sponsors. The Senate committee’s approval follows last week’s passage of the Clean Boating Act in the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure.

The Clean Boating Act would fully and permanently restore a longstanding regulation that excludes recreational boaters and anglers from the federal and state permitting requirements under the Clean Water Act designed for land-based industrial facilities and ocean-bound commercial ships.

This exemption was overturned by a federal court in 2006 in a case focused exclusively on ballast water from commercial vessels.

“While this is excellent progress, if the Clean Boating Act is not passed into law by September, America’s 59 million boaters will be subject to unreasonable permitting requirements, bureaucratic red tape and potentially costly fees, and excessive legal jeopardy through citizen suits,” said Scott Gudes, vice president of government relations for the NMMA, in a statement.

To take action and help protect the rights of recreational boaters and the recreational marine manufacturing industry that provides hundreds of thousands of American jobs, the NMMA urges people to go to [BoatBlue.org](http://BoatBlue.org).

## Coast Guard denies Weaver's Cove LNG appeal

By Susan A. Baird  
PBN Web Editor

BOSTON – The Coast Guard's 1st District, New England, yesterday affirmed the danger of a proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in Fall River.

Weaver's Cove Energy LLC, which is seeking to build the LNG facility, had asked the district commander to reconsider an earlier decision by Capt. Roy Nash, who at the time was Captain of the Port for the Coast Guard's Southeastern New England Sector.

Nash had declared that the channel from Prudence Island to the proposed LNG terminal at Weaver's Cove was unsafe. The risk of incidents as tankers attempted to transit the Taunton River, between the old and new Brightman Street Bridges, was "unacceptably high," he said.

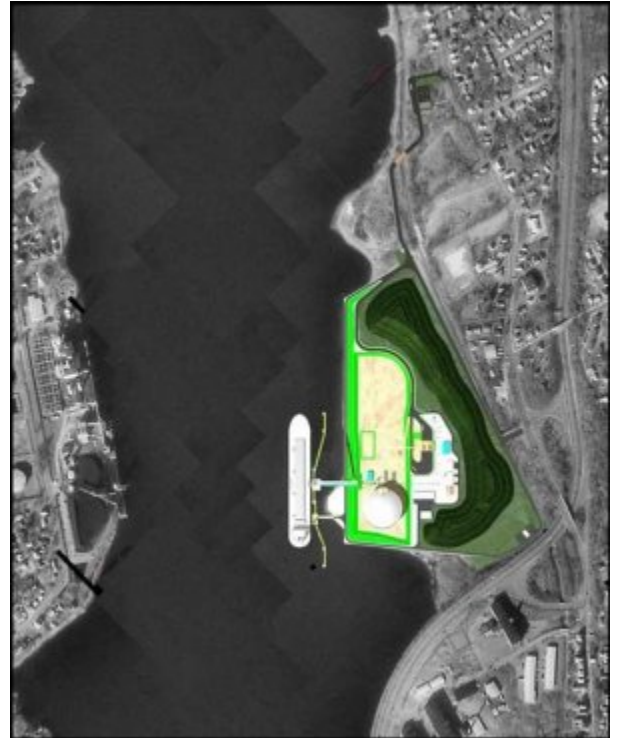
In December, Nash denied a request from Weaver's Cove Energy that he reconsider that assessment. In January, the company went on to file its appeal with Rear Adm. Timothy Sullivan, commander of the New England district. But in his ruling yesterday, Sullivan upheld Nash's conclusions.

"After thorough review of the detailed appeal by Weaver's Cove Energy, I support Captain Nash's decision that the waterway is unsafe in the vicinity of the Brightman Street Bridges for the transit of LNG tankers, because of the same navigational hazards previously addressed," he said.

Sullivan's ruling effectively blocks the proposed LNG terminal. It was applauded last night by members of Rhode Island's congressional delegation.

U.S. Sens. Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse and U.S. Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy noted in a joint statement that the Weaver's Cove proposal would require LNG tankers to routinely pass 11 Rhode Island communities and more than 25 miles of densely populated coastline. The lawmakers have been working to forbid the siting of LNG marine terminals in urban areas.

"Once again, the Coast Guard made the right decision that puts public safety first," Reed said. "From a security and environmental standpoint, the Weaver's Cove LNG project posed too many risks and would have placed a tremendous burden on local law enforcement and taxpayers. The Coast Guard's final ruling will protect Rhode Islanders, our working waterfront, and the environment."



COURTESY WEAVER'S COVE ENERGY LLC  
"THIS REGION needs additional supplies and storage ... of clean natural gas for homes, for industry and electric power generation," said Jim Grasso of Grasso Associates, who represents Weaver's Cove Energy. Above, a rendering of the proposed LNG facility on the Taunton River.

“LNG tanker traffic would pose enormous risks to the vibrancy of Narragansett Bay and the safety of surrounding communities,” said Whitehouse, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. “I’m committed to stopping this facility and glad that the Coast Guard reaffirmed that Weaver’s Cove is not the right place for an LNG terminal.”

“While this decision does not come as a surprise, I am hopeful that Weaver’s Cove will finally get the message,” Kennedy added. “The proposed project is extremely risky and we can’t take chances with the safety and well being of Rhode Islanders and the health of Narragansett Bay.”

The company still may appeal the decision to Rear Adm. Brian Salerno, the Coast Guard’s Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship, in Washington, D.C., according to Sullivan’s office. Weaver’s Cove Energy is “currently reviewing this Coast Guard response ... and we’re analyzing its overall impact,” said Jim Grasso of Grasso Associates, who represents the energy development company. The report is 50 pages long, with numerous attachments, he noted.

“Once this analysis is complete ... then we will determine what our next step will be with regard to this particular LNG shipping proposal,” Grasso said.

The proposal just rejected was for the use of smaller vessels “to deliver LNG to our land-based ship berth,” he said.

“Weaver’s Cove will continue to pursue the project, and we are awaiting decisions from the Coast Guard with respect to two other shipping proposals: ... a revised small-ship proposal to deliver LNG to the shore-based berth ... [and] a large-ship proposal, where a larger ship would deliver LNG to the newly proposed off-shore berth in Newport Harbor.

... “We remain confident that one or all of these three shipping proposals will eventually be deemed acceptable.”

Weaver’s Cove Energy LLC – owned by Hess LNG LLC, a joint venture equally owned by Poten & Partners and Hess Corp. – is seeking to build a liquified natural gas (LNG) terminal off the Taunton River, on a 73-acre site in the North End of Fall River. The facility would have a single 200,000-cubic-meter LNG storage tank. For more information, visit [www.WeaversCove.com](http://www.WeaversCove.com).

The U.S. Coast Guard’s New England District is based in Boston. For more information – including the full text of New England District Commander Rear Adm. Timothy Sullivan’s response to the Weaver’s Cove Energy appeal – visit [www.uscgNewEngland.com](http://www.uscgNewEngland.com). Additional local information is available from the Coast Guard’s Southeastern New England Sector, and its Marine Safety Office Providence, at [homeport.uscg.mil](http://homeport.uscg.mil).

## Carcieri announces 21-member tax policy panel

By PBN Staff

PROVIDENCE – A new Tax Policy Workgroup that will study the state’s current tax system and recommend reforms was announced today by Gov. Donald L. Carcieri. The panel’s creation builds on his appointment of Gary S. Sasse to direct the R.I. Department of Revenue.

“Rhode Island is long overdue for a comprehensive review and reform of the state’s tax policy,” Carcieri said. “Given the state’s current and future fiscal situation, the time to act is now and the formation of this work group is the proper first step.”

The state’s current tax structure places it at a competitive disadvantage to its neighbors in New England, especially Massachusetts and Connecticut, Carcieri added. “Rhode Island cannot prosper if its tax policies hinder the creation of jobs and are a disincentive to investment,” he said.

Sasse will chair the new panel. Before becoming head of the Revenue Department at the beginning of the year, he spent three decades heading the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC).

The independent policy group analyzes the state’s fiscal policies and results; it recently has placed a special emphasis on understanding the state’s position relative to the rest of the country, in terms of the tax load on its citizens and businesses.

In an interview with Providence Business News in January (READ MORE), Sasse said “I don’t think there’s any question that we could do a lot to improve our business-tax climate.

“Rhode Island is a high-tax state,” he added, “and one of the reasons for that is we have the fifth-highest property tax burden in the United States. ... And to address that question, it’s going to require that the state and the municipalities work together to promote programs where services are delivered in the most efficient fashion. There’s a shared responsibility.”

The Tax Policy Workgroup is expected to report its findings and recommendations by the end of the year, according to Carcieri.

He said the group will focus on three areas of state tax policy: Business taxes and the costs and benefits of various tax credits – including job-creation and investment credits – will be reviewed.



PBN FILE PHOTO / FRANK MULLIN

**“RHODE ISLAND cannot prosper if its tax policies hinder the creation of jobs and are a disincentive to investment,” Gov. Donald L. Carcieri said today in announcing the formation of the Tax Policy Workgroup.**



PBN PHOTO / FRANK MULLIN

**GARY S. SASSE, director of the R.I. Department of Revenue, of formerly the leader of the independent Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council, will chair the 21-member panel. Its report will be due by the end of the year.**

Individual taxes – from income to estate to consumption taxes – as well as income-tax credits in place currently and the relationship between tax credits and the alternative flat-rate income tax will be evaluated. And last, property taxes will be examined.

The panel will consist of 21 members. Aside from Sasse, they are:

- Mary F. Bernard, president of the Rhode Island Society of Certified Public Accountants (RISCPA) and a principal of Kahn, Litwin, Renza & Co.
- Edward Cooney, chairman of the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce and vice president and treasurer of Nortek Inc.
- Ellen Frank, senior policy analyst for The Poverty Institute at Rhode Island College’s School of Social Work
- John J. Gelati, president of the Rhode Island Association of Assessing Officers and assessor for the City of Providence
- John Gregory, president and CEO of the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce
- Karen S.D. Grande, a partner in Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge
- Mark Higgins, dean of the University of Rhode Island College of Business
- Saul Kaplan, executive director of the R.I. Economic Development Corporation
- Leonard Lardaro, a professor in the URI Department of Economics
- E. Hans Lundsten, a shareholder in Adler Pollock & Sheehan
- George Nee, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO in Rhode Island
- H. Peter Olsen, a partner in Hinkley Allen Snyder
- Edward P. Pieroni, a partner in Andsager, Bartlett & Pieroni
- Michael Sabitoni, president of the Rhode Island Builders Trade Council
- John Simmons, executive director of RIPEC
- Robert Tannenwald, director, the New England Public Policy Center/Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
- Patricia A. Thompson, a tax partner at Gilstein & Co.
- Al Verrechia, chairman of Hasbro Inc.
- Robert A. Walsh Jr., executive director of NEA-Rhode Island
- Grafton H. Willey IV, shareholder in charge of the Rhode Island offices of Tofias

Additional information, including the full Tax Policy Workgroup news release, is available from the governor’s office at [www.ri.gov](http://www.ri.gov).

## **Rough economic waters shouldn't deter boaters, say dealers**

By JOHN HOWELL

Neither the economy nor the high cost of gasoline can kill the fun of boating and being out on the water. That’s the message area marinas, boat dealers and marine vendors are promoting with a boat buying weekend Friday, June 6 to Sunday, June 8 at Brewer’s Greenwich Bay Marina in Cowesett.

But all the negative news about the economy has done more than get dealers to promote boats and boating. Competitors are working cooperatively to pull off the free event featuring about 100 boats from kayaks to a 60 power boat, vendor displays, a “free bundle for boat buyers” and entertainment. Boats will be displayed on land and in the water.

“Once we told everyone how we planned to tackle the tough economy, everyone was on board,” says Nicole Carbone, director of sales and marketing for Boat World on West Shore Road.

The concept of a local boat show is hardly new. Chris Ruhling, general manager at Brewer Yacht Yard at Cowesett said he has been trying to put one together for better than three years now. As the driving force behind the event, Ruhling said he wanted to get away from the stereotype boat show and concentrate on boat buying – hence the name “Boat Buying Weekend” – in an effort to get people into boats and on the water this summer. “There’s no reason the competition can’t play nice in the sandbox,” he says.

Contrary to reports that boating activity will suffer this summer because of high fuel costs, Ruhling said the Brewer yards have been busy albeit somewhat late in getting started because of cool and rainy weather in April and May.

“Everybody is running late,” he said. He has found that all of his regular customers are planning to use their boats and that the only soft spot has been in the rental of slips for smaller boats.

Ruhling expects boaters will change some of their habits to adjust for the higher cost of fuel. He believes many will plan longer trips to favorite destinations rather than making multiple trips back and forth. He also anticipates many will stay at the dock, as the Brewer marinas have facilities such as a pool, and use their vessels as floating summer homes. And he expects boaters will learn by “cutting back on the throttle a bit” that they can get to where they want and save gas, too.

The buying weekend is directed at attracting the seasoned boater as well as the newcomer.

“We’re trying to attract the regular Joe who has never been in boating,” he said.

And Ruhling offers this reasoning: “Most families are going to take a vacation and a family of four will spend \$3,000 to \$5,000 on a bare bones vacation. A boat can provide you six to eight months and you pick your time. It’s a home away from home.”

As an incentive to buyers the “free bundle for boat buyers” will include a free summer slip at participating Brewer Marinas, free safety and dock package from the dealer, free Coast Guard inspection, discounts at West Marine and Boaters World and one year free with purchase of a two-year membership to Bay Watch RI Marine Towing and Rescue.

The event will feature new powerboats from six area dealers that sell boats from 20 different manufacturers. Ruhling said buyers will also have a choice of “high end quality used boats” to choose from. He said financing packages would be made available, citing one of \$139 a month for a new 17-footer.

Carbone emphasizes that unlike the Newport show that charges admission, this is free of charge. There will also be free parking and Chelo’s and Tim Horton’s will also be providing food and beverages at affordable rates. Those collaborating to make the event possible have collectively kicked in about \$25,000 to promote the 3-day show. They have planned regional advertising including newspaper inserts and have a Web site – [www.greenwichbayboatshow.com](http://www.greenwichbayboatshow.com) - for information.

Carbone said 17 vendors will have displays at the event where “people can learn about new and innovative products in the market.”

But bottom line, she says, “we don’t want boating to die.”

## State analysis: R.I. 11th in nation for tax burden

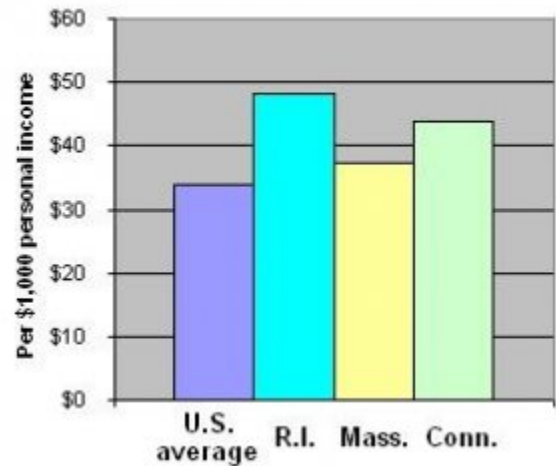
By PBN Staff

PROVIDENCE – The R.I. Department of Revenue today released an analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data for fiscal year 2006 that places the state 11th-highest in the nation in terms of the state and local tax burden as a percentage of personal income, driven in large measure by the state’s property tax levels.

The report, released by the Office of Revenue Analysis (ORA) under the direction of Gary S. Sasse, director of the Revenue Department, ranks Massachusetts 37th highest in terms of total tax burden, while Connecticut placed 20th in the analysis.

In breaking down the numbers, the ORA found that while \$119.79 of every \$1,000 of personal income went to the state and municipalities through income, property and sales taxes (including state and local corporate income taxes), the taxes that ranked the state the highest relative to the rest of the nation were property taxes. As a percentage of \$1,000 of personal income, property taxes yielded \$48.32 for the government, putting Rhode Island at sixth place in the nation. That compares with \$37.36 in Massachusetts (17th place) and \$43.76 in Connecticut (eighth place).

Property tax revenue, FY 2006



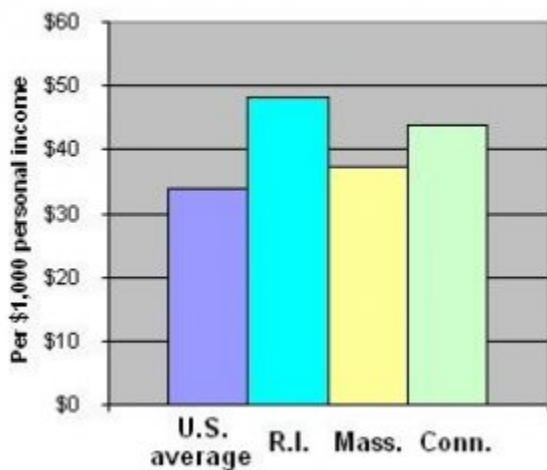
PBN GRAPHIC / R.I. DEPT. OF REVENUE DATA

### FY 2006 state and local taxes

Tax revenue per \$1,000 personal income

	Property taxes	Sales taxes	Individ. inc. tax	Corporate inc. tax	TOTAL
R.I.	\$48.32	\$21.87	\$26.10	\$4.35	\$112.41
Mass.	\$37.36	\$13.83	\$36.17	\$6.41	\$105.69
Conn.	\$43.76	\$17.59	\$33.42	\$3.67	\$114.94
U.S.	\$33.77	\$47.86	\$25.26	\$4.98	\$119.78

Property tax revenue, FY 2006



PBN GRAPHIC / R.I. DEPT. OF REVENUE DATA  
FOR PERSONAL INCOME TAX, Rhode Island ranked 24th nationwide, Massachusetts was 7th and Connecticut was 11th.

The state and local individual income tax collected 2.61 percent of personal income, putting the state in 24th place nationwide. Massachusetts individual income taxes totaled 3.62 percent of personal income (good for seventh place), while Connecticut personal income tax came to 3.34 percent (11th place).

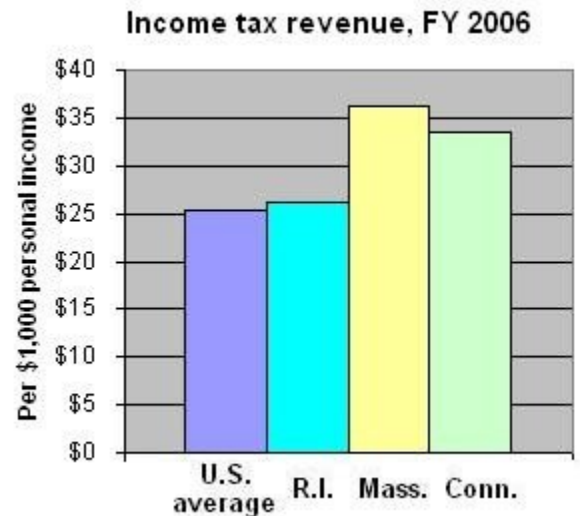
General sales taxes took \$21.87 of every \$1,000 of personal income in Rhode Island, good for 38th place in the nation. Massachusetts residents saw \$13.83 of every \$1,000 in income go to sales tax (46th place), while Connecticut residents contributed \$17.59 of every \$1,000 in personal income to the state’s coffers in sales tax (41st place).

The final group of taxes measured – state and local corporate income taxes – saw Rhode Island land in the middle of the 50 states and Washington, D.C., with \$4.35 of every \$1,000 in personal income allocated to the government, ranking the state 28th. Massachusetts collected \$6.41 of every \$1,000 in personal

income in corporate tax (10th place), and Connecticut collected \$3.67 (36th place).

Gov. Donald L. Carcieri, in commenting on the study, said that, “While Rhode Island’s tax burden is still far too high, especially in comparison to our neighbors in Connecticut and Massachusetts, we have begun to gain a little ground ... Rhode Island’s elected leaders must now build on this progress and continue working to reduce the state’s overall tax burden. ... We must eventually bring our tax burden more into line with our primary competitors.”

The study comes nearly a week after a similar report in Wisconsin ranked Rhode Island 12th-highest in the nation for the percentage of personal income given to state and local government in taxes



PBN GRAPHIC / R.I. DEPT. OF REVENUE DATA FOR PERSONAL INCOME TAX, Rhode Island ranked 24th nationwide, Massachusetts was 7th and Connecticut was 11th.

## 7 waterfront firms pay \$5M in R.I., city taxes

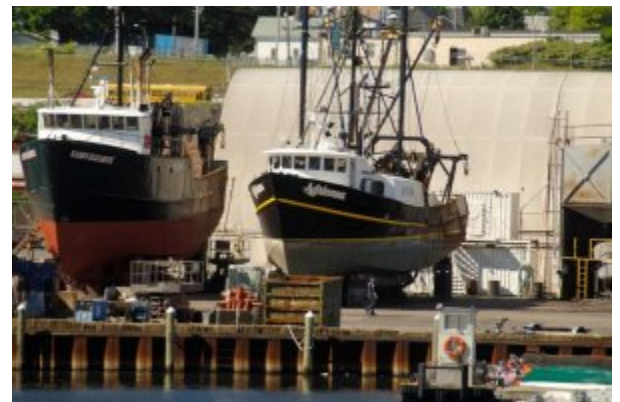
By Kevin Shalvey  
PBN Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE – Seven businesses along Allens Avenue are directly responsible for about \$294 million in annual sales and employ 372 workers with average annual salaries of about \$55,000, according to an independent report released today by the Providence Working Waterfront Alliance.

The report – prepared for the group by FXM Associates of Mattapoisett, Mass. – details the annual economic impact of Promet Marine Services, Sprague Energy, Providence Steamboat, Narragansett Improvement, Walco Electric, Philip Services Corp. and J. Goodison Co.

In 2007, those seven businesses made more than \$140 million in purchases from other Rhode Island businesses; paid property taxes of \$716,371 to the city; and paid other local and state taxes totaling about \$4.2 million, according to the report.

Its release coincides with the start today of the City of Providence’s planning charrettes for the waterfront district. As part of the Providence Tomorrow planning process, neighborhood residents and businesses will be



PBN FILE PHOTO / BRIAN McDONALD  
PWWA MEMBERS – including Promet Marine Services, above – say the mixed-use zoning proposed by the city might drive them out of business. That could be costly, the new study indicates: Just 7 member businesses generate \$5M per year in state and local taxes.

meeting today through Thursday, at Johnson & Wales University's Harborside Campus, to discuss potential zoning changes.

For the waterfront district, those proposed changes include mixed-use zoning. The PWWA was formed in September, when several industrial businesses on the Providence waterfront banded together to fight the city's proposals.

The 29-page report released today by the alliance concludes that "the most effective economic development results from directed and coordinated actions by municipal officials to support existing industrial and commercial uses," rather than from attempts to attract new businesses, as in the city's plans.

In a statement, Promet Vice President and PWWA Chairman Joel Cohen said the waterfront is an important economic engine for the state. "The City of Providence and state leaders need to help protect and grow these businesses and the high-paying blue-collar jobs they provide," he said, "not work to replace them with condos, hotels, marinas and retail stores.

The Providence Working Waterfront Alliance, formed in September 2007, is a group of 14 water-dependent companies that oppose rezoning along the city's industrial Allens Avenue corridor. For more information, visit [www.ProvidenceWorkingWaterfront.org](http://www.ProvidenceWorkingWaterfront.org).

FXM Associates is a consulting firm, based in Mattapoisett, Mass., that specializes in economic planning and research for public- and private-sector clients. For more information, visit [www.fxm.biz](http://www.fxm.biz).

Additional information about the Providence Tomorrow development plan and charettes is available from the City of Providence's Department of Planning and Development at [www.providenceplanning.org](http://www.providenceplanning.org).

## **House subcommittee approves waterfront bill**

The House Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans last week approved H.R. 3223, the Keep Our Working Waterfronts Act, as part of H.R. 5451, the Coastal Zone Reauthorization Act of 2008.

H.R. 3223, sponsored by Rep. Tom Allen, D-Maine, would allow coastal states to invest in the protection, preservation, and expansion of working waterfronts through the Coastal Zone Management Act.

The bill creates a grant program to preserve access to coastal waters for commercial fishing operations and other water-dependent, coastal-related businesses, including recreational boating access. H.R. 3223 does this by amending the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 to establish a competitive matching-grant program administered through the Department of Commerce.

The legislation now heads to the House Natural Resources Committee for consideration.

## **Newport fall show promises large offering**

The Newport International Boat Show will be held Sept. 11-14 at the Newport waterfront in Rhode Island.

One of the four largest in-water boat shows in the country, the Newport show features power and sail. The show will be spread out across 15 acres along America's Cup Avenue, stretching from the Newport Yachting Center to Newport Harbor Hotel & Marina.

More than 850 exhibitors with more than 700 boats ranging in size from 16 feet to 100 feet will be on display, along with kayaks, inflatables, equipment and accessories of all types. The show also includes PassageMaker magazine's TrawlerPort, a special section located at Newport Harbor Hotel & Marina highlighting trawlers in all sizes and style.

New this year is Multihull magazine's "Multihull Lagoon" featuring a full display of sail and power multihull yachts. Plus, services such as financing, insurance, storage, surveying, repair and maintenance will be offered throughout the show. There will also be demonstrations, seminars and workshops with children's activities all four days.

Producers of the Newport International Boat Show and publishers of Cruising World, Power Cruising and Sailing World magazines will once again present "Newport for New Products," the official venue for U.S. debuts of all new boats and boating products.

For information, call (401) 846-1115 or (800) 582-7846, or visit [www.newportboatshow.com](http://www.newportboatshow.com)

## Carcieri names 5 experts to rate wind-farm bids

By Susan A. Baird  
PBN Web Editor

PROVIDENCE – Gov. Donald L. Carcieri this afternoon named a panel of experts to evaluate bids from private contractors interested in creating a wind farm off the coast of Block Island.

“The selection of the team, to evaluate the seven wind farm proposals that were submitted last week, is another important step in our march towards bringing wind power to Rhode Island,” Carcieri said. Seven private companies filed bids in response to the administration’s April request for proposals (RFP), expressing an interest in designing, constructing, financing and operating the offshore wind-energy project.

(READ MORE)

The panel will evaluate the state’s seven bids on the basis of total cost to Rhode Island ratepayers; the bidders’ experience in and qualifications for constructing wind-energy projects; and the number of jobs and tax dollars each proposal would generate, the governor said.

The Wind Energy Proposal Evaluation Team includes experts



PBN FILE PHOTO / FRANK MULLIN

**THE PANEL will complete its work by the end of the summer, picking a company to design, build, finance and operate the offshore wind farm, the governor said. As many as 105 turbines may be erected off the coast to generate about 15% of Rhode Island's electricity needs. Above, the onshore turbine at The Portsmouth Abbey School.**

in energy, development, economic development, oceanography and public policy – but it has no members from the R.I. Coastal Resources Management Council, the agency charged with overseeing coastal projects in Rhode Island.

Its members are:

- David M. Farmer, dean of the University of Rhode Island’s Graduate School of Oceanography
- Andrew Dzykewicz, commissioner of the R.I. Office of Energy Resources
- Thomas F. Ahern, administrator of the R.I. Division of Public Utilities and Carriers
- Saul Kaplan, executive director of the R.I. Economic Development Corporation
- Christopher Long, a policy analyst in the governor’s office.

“The members of this team will represent and evaluate a broad array of concerns,” the governor said. “Tom Ahern will represent the interests of Rhode Island ratepayers, while Saul Kaplan will work to ensure that this project fits with the state’s economic development plans. And with the inclusion of Dr. Farmer, from the URI Graduate School of Oceanography, we can be sure that we are taking into consideration all the elements that will be important for selecting the best project.”

Top contenders will be invited to appear before the panel to present their proposals in detail, Carcieri said last week. The wind-energy team is expected to complete its work by late summer. The selected bidder will then begin seeking permits and conducting the necessary environmental and siting studies.

The naming of the panel is the latest step toward Carcieri’s goal of increasing the use of renewable energy sources in Rhode Island to meet 20 percent of the state’s electrical needs. His 2006 plan called for about 15 percent of the state’s average electrical burden to be wind-generated.

A report commissioned by the R.I. Office of Energy Resources, and published last June, ranked 10 potential wind-energy sites by factors including the amount and cost of energy they could yield, whether they were in state or federal waters and the anticipated visibility from shore of an installation at each site. That report concluded that Carcieri’s goal was achievable, finding that 15 percent of the state’s average energy demand could be generated, at a competitive cost, by establishing a wind farm at offshore sites the study identified as areas J and K.

Carcieri previously has said the project may cost up to \$1.9 billion and require the installation of an estimated 105 wind turbines. Besides helping meet the state’s renewable energy goals, the wind farm is intended to reduce the cost of electricity for Block Island customers.

Additional information, including the State of Rhode Island’s full request for proposals (RFP), is available from the governor’s office at [www.governor.ri.gov](http://www.governor.ri.gov)

## 112 vessels flock to N.Y. Yacht Club regatta

By Susan A. Baird  
PBN Web Editor

NEWPORT – The New York Yacht Club’s 154th Annual Regatta, presented by Rolex, has drawn a fleet of 112 vessels of all vintages to the City by the Sea.

A 19-mile race around Conanicut Island will be the first in a series of races this Saturday and Sunday. These “mini-distance race scenarios will further prepare those crews entering the Newport to Bermuda Race, a 635-nautical-mile ocean-racing classic that also starts off Newport next Friday,” regatta organizers said in a statement today.

Competitors will include the 70-foot PUMA Ocean Racing vessel constructed by Bristol-based Goetz Custom Boats. Its crew – led by Ken Read of Newport (READ MORE) – is gearing up for the nine-month, around-the-world Volvo Ocean Race that begins this October in Alicante, Spain.

Also on hand will be Hartford resident George David’s 90-foot Rambler, which in the past year has broken records in the Nordbank Blue Race (transatlantic), Rolex Middle Sea Race and the Offshore Race Rolex Buenos Aires to Rio de Janeiro. The vessel numbers several Rhode Islanders among its crew despite helmsman Read’s departure.

The Rambler is the second-largest vessel in the regatta, after the 99-foot super-maxi Speedboat that will be skippered by Volvo-winning Mike Sanderson. The 66-foot Numbers, from Judel-Vrolijk, owned by Dan Meyers of Boston and Newport, will be competing as well.

“I’ve been doing the New York Yacht Club events for a couple of decades, and I don’t think I’ve ever seen a tougher fleet,” David told the club, noting that his vessel will be racing against half a dozen new IRC designs. Recent structural changes have made Rambler “stiffer and faster,” he added, and should help his 2002 vessel compete with newer models.

“This won’t just be one of the most competitive regattas of the season, but of this century,” Read said. The event also “is going to be hugely important for PUMA,” he added, “because we only have a small window to learn how to boat-handle these monsters around the buoys.” There are inshore buoy races at each of the Volvo stopovers, Read said.



COURTESY NEW YORK YACHT CLUB  
**THE RAMBLER**, a 90-foot vessel owned by Hartford resident George David, has been modified to help the 2002 yacht stay competitive, David said. In the past year, Rambler has set records in several races.



PBN FILE PHOTO / STEPHANIE EWENS  
**KEN READ** is captain of the PUMA crew, which is using the Annual Regatta to help prepare for the '08-'09 Volvo Ocean Race. Their 70-footer was designed by Botin Carkeek of Spain and crafted by Goetz Custom Boats to give the team “the fastest ride around the planet,” he told PBN last year.

Along with the newer vessels, the Annual Regatta will showcase vintage racing craft in the 12-Meter and Classics divisions. (The event is the first in the New York Yacht Club's annual Classics Series.) America's Cup victors Intrepid and Courageous will be among the 12-meter competitors while 1931 Transatlantic winner Dorade, one of Olin Stephens' earliest designs, will be among the classic entries.

Additional information about the New York Yacht Club and its 154th Annual Regatta, presented by Rolex, is available at [www.nyyc.org](http://www.nyyc.org).

## **Newport Chamber offers info on immigration law**

By PBN Staff

MIDDLETOWN – The Newport County Chamber of Commerce, responding to the immigration arrests this week on Aquidneck Island, today made available a variety of resources on immigration law, employer compliance and business visa regulations.

The creation of the immigration page at [www.NewportChamber.com](http://www.NewportChamber.com) follows an operation by U.S. Department of Homeland Security's division of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) – focusing on suspected immigration violations in Newport and Middletown – that resulted in 42 arrests. (The suspects came from Brazil, Guatemala and Mexico, federal officials said in announcing the operation. Thirty-three are subject to immediate deportation.)

Featured on the new page are:

- PowerPoint presentations from the Chamber's 2008 Business & Immigration Law Conference, held March 13 at Hotel Viking in Newport.
- Links to three local law firms whose practices include U.S. immigration law.
- A link to the International Institute of Rhode Island, a nonprofit organization based in Providence that provides educational, legal, and social services to immigrants and refugees across southeastern New England.
- Links to ICE, the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, as well as the E-Verify employment-verification system operated by the Department of Homeland Security and the Social Security Administration.

The Newport County Chamber is a business advocacy organization with more than 1,200 members. Its compilation of immigration resources can be found at [www.newportchamber.com/immigration](http://www.newportchamber.com/immigration).

## **Maintain a positive attitude**

Three to four times a week someone from the news media calls our association office to ask the same questions: "Are boat sales off because of the economy? Or, Is the price of fuel going to impact boating this summer?" Duh! We've known for a long time that the only news they are expecting is negative, the good news always seems to get lost in the wake. You need to answer them truthfully but you especially need to have the right message ready to pass on.

The important point is that boating is a great life style and boaters are a strong breed. They may shorten their trips, spend more time aboard tied up in their slips or floating in the marina pool or at best, using the closer fishing grounds, but boating they will enjoy.

That's the right message, positive, enjoyable, family fun, no property taxes, and meeting new friends type of message. Sure, gas prices are up but how much more costly for that one-hour cruise? \$15-20? Is freedom from shore worth that? Of course, that and all the other benefits boating and fishing afford.

When you are queried, keep a positive attitude. Over four decades in this great industry has taught me that the economy runs in cycles and you need a positive mindset to survive between the peaks. Diversify your operations and be realistic. If you need to make tough decisions, don't wait too long to make them but above all put a positive front on your attitude and your outlook.

We don't need to make the media portray our industry in a light that is more negative than warranted. Be positive, the latest predictions are for another 18 months before the turnaround. So, buckle down and reinvest in yourself and your business and make the best of a difficult time and be positive!

Grant W. Westerson  
Executive Director  
CT Marine Trades Association



Comments or articles for submission, contact Lisa A. DiRaimo @ 401.615.5419 or [ldiraimo@cox.net](mailto:ldiraimo@cox.net)

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