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COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

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March 8, 1994

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APR 8 1994

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Ms. Lauren J. Belzin
Acting Director, Office of Legislative Affairs
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Room 808
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Belzin:

Thank you for your letter concerning marine radio license fees. I apologize for the delay in responding to your letter.

I am pleased to look into this matter for you, and have asked the Federal Communications Commission to consider and comment on the issues you have raised. As soon as I have a response, I will be back in touch with you.

In the meantime, thanks again for contacting my office. I hope that I can be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Dianne Feinstein
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

DF:rcl

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List A B C D E

488 330

WALT BILOFSKY
4804 PARADISE DRIVE
TIBURON, CALIFORNIA 94920
—
TELEPHONE (415) 435-4433

January 15, 1994

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington, DC

Re: Proposed FCC doubling of marine radio license fee

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing to ask your help in opposing a proposal by the FCC to double, to \$70, the fee charged to boaters for a license for marine VHF radios.

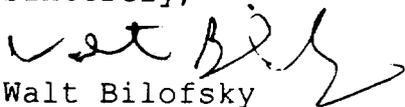
A VHF radio is a vital safety item which should be aboard every boat. Possession and proper use of these radios saves lives and property. Their use by boaters to report dangerous situations to the Coast Guard helps that agency do its job, and reduces its work load.

The proposed regulation would discourage boaters from obtaining VHF radios and from properly licensing those that are obtained. It would also encourage boaters who sell their boat and buy a new one to carry their unexpired license to the new vessel.

All these effects are contrary to the public safety and welfare.

For these reasons, I oppose the proposed fee increase.

Sincerely,


Walt Bilofsky

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

One Bowdoin Square
10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
3/2/94

94-19

O. Lou Sizemore
Congressional Correspondence Staff
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street - Room 857
Washington, DC 20554

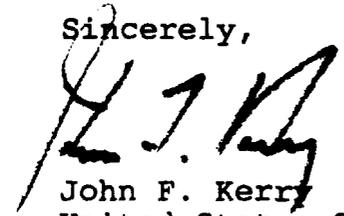
Dear Mr. Sizemore:

I am writing on behalf of my constituent Jaret Dickerman of Braintree, Massachusetts.

Mr. Dickerman has expressed his concern regarding a new marine radio fee. Since the VHF radio is a necessity for safe sailing, Mr. Dickerman fears that an imposed fee would make ownership prohibitive. This in turn could yield a higher accident and death rate. Would you review this matter and forward your findings to my office.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Kevin Curtis of my Boston office at (617) 565-8519 with any questions. Thank you and best wishes.

Sincerely,



John F. Kerry
United States Senator

JFK/ama/dickerson

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I am writing to you to express my concern about the new
VHF radio fee. I think that this fee will become very
dangerous and deadly. A lot of people will not be able to
afford this fee, because of the large cost of VHF radios.
There is also a radio license that you must pay for on top of
the large costs of VHF fees, and boat registrations. The VHF
radio shouldn't be a privilege it should be a necessity. If
not for VHF radios thousands of people would die every year if
not for these radios. This is like any other safety item on a
boat and should be treated the same. The rules on a boat
don't need a gun permit for the flare gun on a boat. So I
don't think that a boat should have to have a users fee on
their VHF radios. I was wondering if you could take this issue
into consideration. This would have a direct effect on the
boat owning community.

Sincerely,

Janet Dickerman

Janet Dickerman

BARBARA A. MIKULSKI
MARYLAND

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SUITE 380
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

(202) 224-4864
TDD: (202) 224-6223

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

March 4, 1994

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APR - 8 1994

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Ms. Lauren J. Belzin
Federal Communication Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Belzin:

I am writing to request your consideration of the attached correspondence from Mr. Richard Novotny. Please respond directly to Mr. Novotny and send a copy to Steve Crane of my staff.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Mikulski

Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator

BAM:sec
Enclosure

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MARYLAND SALTWATER SPORTFISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION, INC.

7626 Baltimore & Annapolis Blvd. Glen Burnie, MD 21060-3530

February 23, 1994

Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senate
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Mikulski,

The Maryland Saltwater Sportfishermen's Association (MSSA) would like to bring to your attention an issue of great concern to our 7,000 members. We have been made aware of a potential safety hazard that could develop in the recreational boating community. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is planning to charge the recreational boating public a \$7.00 annual user fee for the use of a VHF radio. We were informed that you would have to purchase this user fee for a mandatory 10 year license. This now makes an initial outlay of \$70 and in addition a \$35 or \$40 processing fee for your application. This will force many boaters not to carry a VHF marine radios on board their boat.

The ship station license was given free to recreational boaters until May of 1990 to individuals wishing to use a VHF marine radio. Since that time the FCC has charged an individual a \$35 processing fee to apply or renew their ship station license for a 5 year period. This was basically excepted by the recreational boating community. We feel that a VHF marine radio is vital piece of safety equipment. Every boat should have a VHF radio in case of any emergency breakdowns or a life threatening situation. In addition to the reasons stated above, recreational captains can also monitor any distress calls on the emergency call channel in order to give assistance to other boaters in need of help. Captains can monitor any changing weather conditions that could occur in a very short period of time while on the water.

We urge you to act immediately on behalf of the recreational boating community to have this user fee for a VHF radio granted a special exception. Please contact the

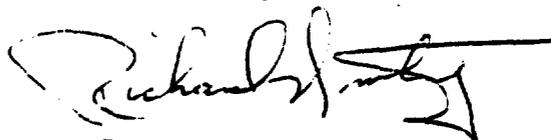
FCC
Page 2

FCC requesting a special exception for the cost of this user fee in the name of safety. It is extremely important that boaters carry these VHF radios for several safety factors.

I have enclosed a copy of a letter that was sent to Mr. William Caton, Secretary of the FCC, requesting him to grant a special exception for the \$70 cost of a 10 year license. We would like to request a copy of any correspondence that is sent to Mr. Caton from your office in reference to this very important issue.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Novotny", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard Novotny
Executive Director

Enclosure

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

MAS H. ANDREWS

MEMBER OF CONGRESS
FIRST DISTRICT, MAINE

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1530 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1901
(202) 225-6116

DISTRICT OFFICE:
136 COMMERCIAL STREET
PORTLAND, ME 04101
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COMMITTEE ON
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MERCHANT MARINE
AND FISHERIES

COMMITTEE ON
SMALL BUSINESS

MAJORITY WHIP AT LARGE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

March 28, 1994

94-19
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APR - 8 1994

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Linda Townsend Solheim
Director, Legislative Affairs
Federal Communications Commission
Room 808
1919 M Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Ms. Solheim:

I was recently contacted by Joseph McHugh of Cape Elizabeth, Maine. He is concerned that the Federal Communication Commission's will raise user fees for all classes of FCC license holders from \$35 to \$110, and has provided me with a copy of an article from Boat/U.S. magazine, which discusses his concerns in more detail (enclosed).

The Boat/U.S. article indicates that the United States Coast Guard opposes applying these fees to recreational boaters because of safety and search and rescue concerns. Mr. McHugh believes that recreational boaters should be exempted from the fee increase because of these reasons. Any assistance you could provide in responding to Mr. McHugh's concerns would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Suzanne C. Onos
Field Representative

enclosure

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BOAT/U.S. Reports
Gov't Affairs (703-461-2845)
MARCH 94 pg 4

The Association has joined forces with friends in Congress, the Petroleum Marketers Association, and the National Marine Manufacturers Association to convince the IRS that some regulatory flexibility is essential to solve the problem.

Members owning diesel boats are urged to write or fax BOAT/U.S. Government Affairs at 703-461-2845 as soon as possible with first-hand information on fuel docks that are no longer servicing recreational boats, as well as how far you now have to travel to obtain fuel.

FCC License Fees To Skyrocket

The cost of complying with federal licensing requirements for marine VHF radios could go from the current \$95 to \$110 come April 1 unless boat owners let key members of Congress know what they think about this new "fee."

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) was authorized by Congress in 1993 to begin collecting "user fees" from all classes of FCC license holders.

BOAT/U.S. has been working behind the scenes to convince the FCC that drastically increasing fees for recreational boaters, unlike large commercial licensees, could mean that many will do without a radio on board their boats.

Fewer people having VHF radios on board means fewer people able to get weather updates, call for help in an emergency or able to

hear another's call for help on the water. The Coast Guard is on record opposing the fees for boaters because of safety and search and rescue concerns.

BOAT/U.S. has been advised that decision-makers at the FCC have said they need direction from Congress in order to grant an exemption to an entire class.

All BOAT/U.S. members, especially those from Michigan and South Carolina, are urged to contact the following:

• Rep. John Dingell, Chairman
Energy & Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

• Sen. Ernest Hollings, Chairman
Senate Commerce Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

in sailboats 24 feet or less in length when the vessel is under sail. A life jacket would be required at all times for those using a rowboat or canoe.

• All Alabama boaters would be required within five years of enactment to pass a written or oral multiple choice examination which would be given at the time a driver's license is renewed. The test is expected to have 15-20 questions, and Commissioner Grimsley is quoted as saying, "Anyone who can't pass this test is an idiot that doesn't need to be on the water anyway."

• The one-time charge would be \$5 and the certification (license) must be renewed every four years. Violators face a minimum \$100 fine. Those who have already completed a recognized boating safety course would be exempted from the exam.

• Anyone operating an open cockpit vessel less than 24 feet in length powered by more than 50 hp would be required to have installed a lanyard-type engine shut-off switch (kill-switch) and attach the device to their person.

• Boaters between the ages of 14 and 18, unaccompanied by an adult, would be prohibited from operating a vessel larger than 14 feet in length, powered by more than 50 hp.

• A point system would be established whereby a boater's license could be suspended without a hear-

ing or reason
• "Reckless operation," a C
A misdemeanor (minimum \$150), is defined as the operation of a vessel in willful disregard for the safety of other persons so as to endanger life, limb or property.

• "Careless operation," a B misdemeanor (minimum \$100), is defined as endangering life, limb or property by operating a vessel through negligence, carelessness, or inattention.

• In addition, a license could be revoked for a host of reasons including reckless or careless operation of a vessel, failing to stop to render assistance as required by law and unauthorized use of a vessel belonging to someone else.

• There is a special provision in the legislation for personal watercraft which defines "watercraft" as a vessel through congested vessel traffic, high speed" or "creating a nuisance" as reckless operation. Violators face a minimum \$100 fine.

• Waterskiers would be required to have an observer on board in addition to the operator. The operation of persons or equipment on vessels so as to obstruct the safe operation of other vessels would be prohibited.

All BOAT/U.S. members in Alabama have been provided with a summary of the legislation and are asked to express their views to their elected representatives.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

GILCHREST
DISTRICT, MARYLAND

ANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-2001
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-5311
FAX: (202) 225-0254



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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

March 28, 1994

The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Under the telecommunications section of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993, the FCC is required to impose user fees on a wide variety of its services. As a result, the FCC is proposing an increase in the cost of an FCC license for boaters equipped with VHF radios from \$35 for ten years to \$105 for ten years--a 300 percent increase.

Currently, of the 10 million boats that are equipped with VHF radios only 650,000 of them, or 6.5 percent, possess an FCC license. Increasing fees will unfairly place the burden of deficit reduction on those few persons who do obtain FCC licenses.

Furthermore, I am afraid that an increase in the FCC license fee would discourage, rather than encourage, boaters to equip their boats with VHF radios. If this is the case, boaters may find themselves in greater danger during emergency situations.

The opposition to the proposed FCC license fee increase does not come strictly from boaters and the boating industry. The agency in charge of protecting our waters and regulating boaters, the Coast Guard, also opposes the proposed license increase. In fact, the Coast Guard advocates waiving the VHF radio fee altogether. In a recent letter to your agency, Coast Guard Commandant J.W. Kime states that a waiver in the license fee would "enhance maritime safety and promote the public interest."

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Wayne T. Gilchrest
Member of Congress

WTG:mak

AND TRANSPORTATION
WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT
AVIATION
INVESTIGATION AND OVERSIGHT
COMMITTEE ON MERCHANT MARINE
AND FISHERIES
COAST GUARD AND NAVIGATION
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING
SELECT COMMITTEE ON RUMBER

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-8025

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1565

March 30, 1994

Ms. Lauren J. Belzin
Director, Office of Legislative Affairs
Federal Communications Commission
Room 808
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Belzin:

The enclosed communication is respectfully referred for your consideration, since it appears to be a matter that falls within your jurisdiction.

I would appreciate you looking into this matter and providing me with comments that might serve as the basis for a reply to my correspondent.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

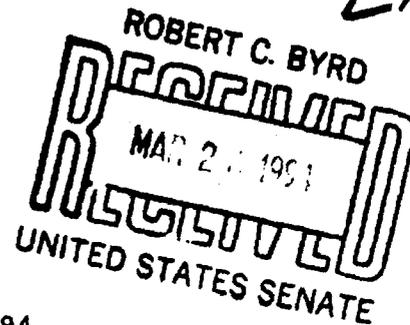
With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Robert C. Byrd
Robert C. Byrd

RCB:es

Wallace S. Venable
Route 13 Box 125
Morgantown WV 26505-8526
(304) 328-5128



March 20, 1994

Senator Robert Byrd
(West Virginia)
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Byrd;

I would like to ask you to support the move to demand that the FCC keep radio license fees for recreational boats at a reasonable level.

I boat on a collection of craft, the most expensive of which cost me about \$2000. I use a type of radio which now costs less than \$100. The FCC proposes to charge me \$110 per boat for the use of a \$100 radio.

I am one of the many boaters who use my VHF marine radio only occasionally, and almost exclusively for matters related to navigation and safety. I boat on the Ohio and Monongalia Rivers. I use my radio to contact the government locks at the dams, which is a convenience to the Corps of Engineers since it gives them information of the type of boat requesting service, rather than forcing them to look over the end of the lock wall to see who has pulled their horn rope. I use my radio to listen to the radio calls of the river towboat pilots so that I can stay out of their way. I use my radio to listen for calls for help from other boaters, both commercial and recreational. I use my radio when at regattas to coordinate my movements with other boats.

In my area, the hills and distances make it virtually impossible to use the VHF marine radio as a "portable telephone," and exchanges between boats are limited to distances of a few miles.

I have no objection to a reasonable users' fee, but what is a "reasonable license fee?" One matched to the cost of the services received from the agency. In the case of a VHF marine radio on the rivers, the only direct service I receive from the FCC is the piece of paper on which my license is printed. I have a "Fleet License" for three boats, for the renewal of which I would be charged \$330, and for which I receive only one copy of the license. I believe it is difficult to justify a fee of more than \$25 per license (not per vessel) for something which is intended primarily as a safety measure.

If the proposed fee increase to \$110 is established, I am one of those many inland boaters who will "toss the radio over the side," when my license expires, even though it will decrease my safety.

Sincerely yours,

Wallace Venable

MACK
ADA

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0904

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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED March 16, 1994

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Lauren J. Bezlin
Office of Legislative Affairs
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, Northwest
Room 808
Washington, D.C. 20554

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find correspondence from several of our constituents regarding proposed increases of VHF boating licensing fees.

I would appreciate it if you respond directly to our constituent with a copy to our office. If you have any questions, please contact Victoria Anderson at our Washington office located at 517 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, (202) 224-5274.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Connie Mack

Connie Mack
United States Senator

CM/vfa

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List A B C D E

Richard F. Landeck
1941 Fox Hollow Dr.
Auburndale, FL 33823

*Vic
COMM*

Sen. Connie Mack
517 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Proposed fee increase for Marine Radio Licence.

Dear Senator Mack:

I am deeply concerned about the safety of U.S. boating that the proposed increase in Marine Radio Licensing Fees as proposed by the FCC from \$35.00 to \$110.00.

I am, like many others who have small boats, licensed to have a marine radio on board. I have this radio for the safety it affords to my family by being able to: originate a distress call when necessary, receive weather updates, and to respond to others distress calls. The ability to call for help and to respond to others calls is very important today as the U.S. Coast Guards budget is being reduced and their ability to respond to the emergency calls deteriorates.

I feel that this increase is unwarranted and unjustifiable and will result in a serious decrease in marine safety as boaters opt to function without radios or attempt to use other modes like "CB" that are not intended for this use and are not as reliable.

I would appreciate your assistance in "Stopping the Insanity" of this FCC action.

Thank you for your assistance.


Richard F. Landeck

Peter Stephens
2130 Dyan Way
Maitland, FL 32751

March 2, 1994

Senator Connie Mack
517 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20510

VK
COMM.

Dear Senator Mack,

It has just come to my attention through my membership in Boat/US Reports March Issue, that the FCC is considering raising the fee for licenses to operate VHF radios. I have no problem paying the current \$35.00 fee for the license. The proposed \$110.00 fee is totally out of line with what should be charged.

I recently used my marine radio to call for assistance when my boat became beached on a sand bar in the Florida Keys. The tide had run out, and I was facing the possibility of having to stay out in the open for at least 8 hours until the tide came back in. It would have been after midnight, and I don't know if you have ever experience the agony of the Florida saltwater mosquito, but I doubt it would have been pleasurable out on the sand bar after dark. With my marine radio, I was able to summon help through the Coast Guard station on Key West, for which I was extremely grateful. If I had to pay more than the current fee, I would probably not have had the radio with me or would have been considered a felon for using the radio to summon help.

Please do not let the FCC raise the fee for operator licenses. I fear that this will lead to a catastrophe that could be prevented if the fee was left as it is instead of increasing it. Don't make felons out of us over something as stupid as a licensing fee for something that saves lives.

Sincerely,


Peter Stephens

Sen. Connie Mack
241 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

VIC
COMM.

The proposal, by the FCC, to raise the license fee for marine VHF radios to \$110 is ridiculous. There is no way I could afford that fee, and I sure can't afford the fine for transmitting without a license. So if the fee is raised above \$35 I won't be able to use my radio. I'm a recreational boater and a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Without use of a VHF radio I will not be able to assist the Coast Guard as I presently do at least once a week.

Robert H. McCaw

Robert H. McCaw
1128 Pin Oak Circle
Niceville, FL 32578

Bernard Lomrantz
284 Lookout Point
Osprey, FL 34229

3/2/94

U.S. SENATOR CONNIE MAEK
517 HART SENATE BLOC.
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

VHF
COMM

DEAR SENATOR MAEK,

THEY ARE TRYING TO INCREASE FEDERAL LICENSING FEES
FOR MARINE V.H.F. RADIOS FROM \$35 TO \$110. COME
APRIL 1st

EVEN THE COAST GUARD IS ON RECORD OPPOSING THE
FEES FOR BOATERS BECAUSE OF SAFETY AND SEARCH
RESCUE CONCERNS.

FEWER PEOPLE HAVING V.H.F. RADIOS ON BOARD MEANS
FEWER PEOPLE ABLE TO GET WEATHER REPORT
UPDATES, CALL FOR HELP IN AN EMERGENCY OR
ABLE TO HEAR ANOTHERS CALL FOR HELP ON THE
WATER.

I HAVE A V.H.F. RADIO ON MY BOAT ALREADY
BECAUSE IT'S A NECESSITY - NOT A TOY OR A
LUXURY. I LIKE TO THINK OF MY V.H.F. RADIO
AS A SECOND MOTOR - WHICH WILL GET ME HOME
IF MOTOR #1 COLLS OUT.

DON'T LET THEM INCREASE THE FEES. WE HAVE
TOO MANY CLOSE CALLS AT SEA - EVEN WITH
THE EQUIPMENT.

THANK YOU



28 February 1994

Sen. Connie Mack
517 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510-0903

VIC
COMM

Dear Sir:

It is my understanding that the Federal Communication Commission is considering increasing the user fees for VHF radios on recreational boats from the current \$35 to \$110. In my opinion this increase would result in many boat owners doing without VHF radios in their boats. Many people would no longer be able to receive weather updates, this could result in the loss of life. Because fewer people would have radios someone's call for help may go unanswered and the result could be loss of life.

Sincerely



Grady L. Ingram
1600 Vega Ave
Merritt Island, Fl 32953

CC: Sen. Ernest Hollings
Chairman Senate Commerce Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Rep. Jim Bacchus
431 Cannon House Office Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20515-0911

Rep. John Dingell
Chairman Energy & commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 4, 1994

*CMJ
Connie*

Senator Connie Mack
1342 Colonial Blvd, Suite 27
Ft. Myers, FL 33907

Dear Senator Mack:

I recently read in the March 1994 issue of Boat/U.S. "Reports", that the cost of an FCC license to operate a VHF marine radio could go from \$35.00 to \$110.00 effective April 1, 1994.

As a boat owner over the last 25 plus years, I have always owned and used a properly licensed marine radio. First with the original AM Band until it was banned in U.S. waters, then with the present VHF Band. I consider my VHF radio the most important safety device on my boat and I use it frequently for my own benefit, i.e. weather, radio telephone, and occasional assistance, as well as to help others on the water.

I am adamantly opposed to this outrageous and unwarranted increase in "user fee". If this proposed increase is approved, Congress will deal a severe blow to marine safety. Many boat owners will not take existing VHF radios aboard their boats and many new boat owners will not purchase VHF radios because of this excessive "user-fee". What a tragedy it would be if a boating family were lost at sea and unable to call for help. Why would Congress want to penalize the very people they should be helping?

Take the advise of the United States Coast Guard and reject this unjust fee and help us maintain reasonable ability to obtain help and information on the water when needed.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Watson
Robert E. Watson
2296 Lemon Street
St. James City, FL 33956

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MAR 07 1994

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March 2, 1994

Dear Senator Mack;

Our state is one of the states that have the most boats. VHF radios are very important to most boats. I just renewed my license for \$35.00. When my next renewal comes up and the price is too high I will just drop the license. There is no excuse for license fees to skyrocket. If this increase goes through most small boats will drop the license.

Yours Truly
John Keenan

ELL
NOIS
ND LABOR
OMMITTEE:
ARDS, OCCUPATIONAL
ALTH AND SAFETY
KING MINORITY MEMBER
OR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS
LECT EDUCATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY
SUBCOMMITTEE:
ENERGY
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1313

March 21, 1994

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

(202) 225-3510
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OFFICE:
115 W. 65TH STREET
SUITE 100
CLARENDON HILLS, IL 60514
(708) 855-2052

OMD
for
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RECEIVED
94-12
APR - 8 1994
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Mr. Terry Haines
Chief of Staff
Federal Communications Comm.
1919 M Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20554-0001

Dear Mr. Haines:

I was recently contacted by one of my constituents, John M. Chigas.

In order to reply to my constituent's concerns, I am respectfully referring the attached material to you for review, consideration, and comment. Please return my enclosure with your response. Any questions can be directed to Bill Garretson at (202) 225-3515 in my Washington office.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Harris W. Fawell

Harris W. Fawell
Member of Congress

HWF:wg

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List A B C D E

March 07, 1994

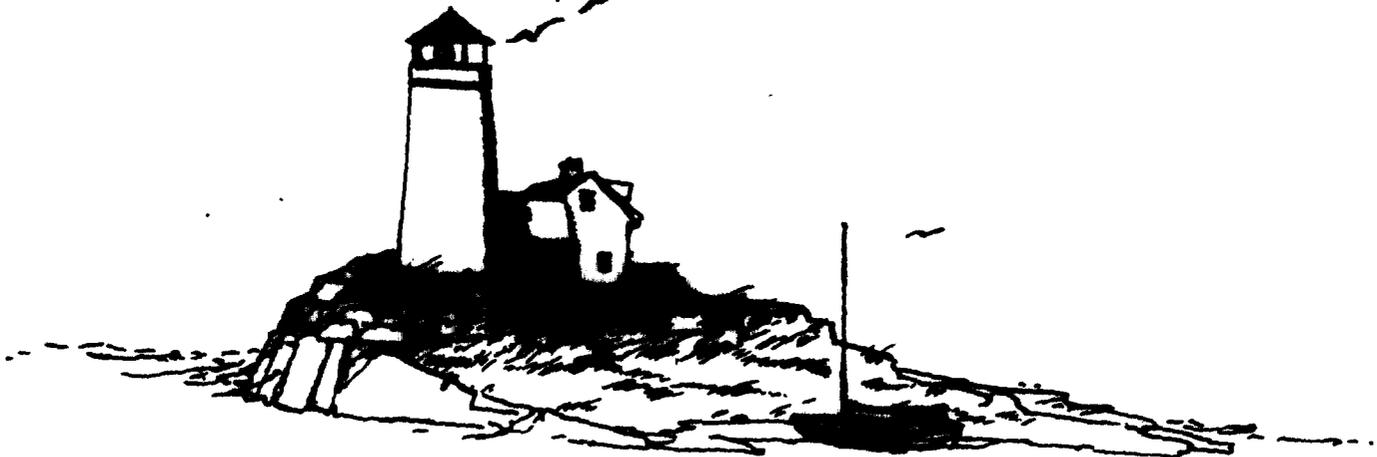
Representative Harris W. Fawell
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-1313

Dear Representative Fawell:

I would just like to let you know that the "assault" on recreational boaters in Washington is alive and well. (See enclosed). You have many of us in your district, so I hope you do understand our plight at times. We seem to have been targeted as the group that can solve all of the financial woes of the Federal Government. I know of no other hobby group that has been targeted in this manner! I know you are not directly involved in these particular issues at this time, but I wanted you to know how these "fees" look from the point of view of the boating hobby enthusiast. I may be looking for a new hobby real soon.

Very truly yours,

John M. Chigas
John M. Chigas
5S 177 N. Webster Street
Naperville, IL 60563-1239



March 07, 1994

Senator Ernest Hollings, Chairman
Senate Commerce Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hollings:

I'm extremely concerned about the proposal to drastically increase the licensing "fee" for marine radios, particularly for recreational boaters. For most of us, the VHF radio is primarily a safety item --- to know you can reach other boats or the U.S. Coast Guard in an emergency situation. Otherwise, it is seldom used. My wife and I have been boating for over 15 years, and we have heard many rescues coordinated over the VHF frequencies. The \$35 fee imposed only a few years ago was reasonable, and I suspect unopposed by most boaters. This additional "fee" being considered is unreasonable, and will have far reaching implications.

During the 80's, a very large influx of people into recreational boating occurred, making the monitoring of VHF frequencies that much more difficult for the FCC. I would estimate that now as much as 50% of the calls heard on the VHF channels are now made carelessly, and without the caller using his call sign (license identification). An increase in the licensing fee will only drastically increase this abuse of the system, as less people will even bother to obtain a license. The VHF network could well soon go the route of the CB network, which was initially licensed, but because of the sheer numbers of operators and abuses, soon caused the FCC to give up on any attempt to control or license.

Many conscientious and practical boaters, which I believe includes myself, will avoid any additional unreasonable fee by just doing without a VHF radio, even though it is probably the best piece of safety equipment we could have aboard. We all have to decide what is "reasonable" within our boating budget. I can only hope we will be able to reach someone on the CB frequencies in an emergency, if required.

The U.S. Coast Guard is on record as opposing the proposed additional fee, and who is in a better position to judge its impact on boating safety? Your "unreasonable" additional license fee could literally wipe out years of effort by the Coast Guard and many other groups to improve boating safety!

If you consider the implications of the proposed additional licensing fee for recreational boaters thoroughly, I'm sure you'll realize it will not produce the expected revenue, could do damage to the VHF network, and compromise boating safety.

Very truly yours,

John M. Chigas
John M. Chigas
55 177 N. Webster Street
Naperville, IL 60563-1239

cc: Representative Harris W. Fawell
Boat U.S.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

JAMES A. HILL
02 E. Voltaire Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85022-4739

MAR 21 1994

March 21,, 19...94.

Congressional Liaison
Federal Communications Comm.
Washington, D.C. 20554

RECEIVED

March 13, 1994

APR - 8 1994

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

94-19

Sir/Madam:

The attached communication is sent for your consideration. Please investigate the statements contained therein and forward me the necessary information for reply, returning the enclosed correspondence with your answer.

Yours truly,


JON KYL, M.C.

ATTN:tg

ention that the Federal Communications
se the cost of a marine VHF radio license from

item of safety for many boaters. It provides
visories, enables a boater to call for help in an
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at a cost of not much more than \$100, the
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uly,



James A. Hill

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335162

JAMES A. HILL
302 E. Voltaire Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85022-4739

MAR 21 1994

March 13, 1994

Rep. John Kyl
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

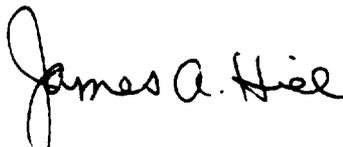
Dear Mr. Kyl,

It has recently come to my attention that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) intends to increase the cost of a marine VHF radio license from \$35 to \$110 on April 1.

A marine VHF radio is a basic item of safety for many boaters. It provides access to weather information and advisories, enables a boater to call for help in an emergency or respond to another boater's call for help in an emergency. With the increased availability of handheld units at a cost of not much more than \$100, the hardware has become practical in terms of both size and price for even the small boat owner/user such as myself. The Coast Guard is on record opposing the fees for boaters because of safety and search and rescue concerns. I would like to add my voice, too, in opposition to such fees.

I request that you oppose these fee increases for marine VHF radio licenses.

Yours truly,



James A. Hill