

12/12/09  
Approved by BOG for  
mailing.

December 12, 2009

Colonel George F. Johnson IV  
Superintendent, Maryland Natural Resources Police  
Tawes State Office Building, E3  
580 Taylor Avenue  
Annapolis, Maryland, 21401

Dear Colonel Johnson,

It has been brought to the attention of the Board of Governors of the Solomons Island Yacht Club that consideration is being given to raising the age from under 7 to under 13 years in which children aboard boats under 21 feet which are underway must wear a personal flotation device. Our Governors feel strongly that the proposal is an unnecessary requirement by the government and the parents are the ones best able to judge for their children over the age of 7 for the need to wear a life jacket. We recognize that USCG statistics indicate that most boating related drownings could be prevented with the use of PFDs. Parents, through education, should be encouraged to require their children seven and older to wear PFD's when underway in small boats and particularly in inclement weather.

We strongly support safe and smart boating and the welfare of all those who travel on the water. We also strongly support the educational opportunities offered by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the U. S. Power Squadron and the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and are pleased to see the appropriate contact information on the 2010 Boating Tips that you send out. We would like to see extensive advertising of these courses in preparation for the next boating season. A better educated boater is a benefit to all boaters.

On behalf of our Board of Governors I respectfully request that our position as being opposed to the proposed requirement of raising the age to under 13 to wear a life jacket be given consideration and made a part of the record before a decision is made. Thank you for your attention to our concern.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gerald W. Eastwood  
Commodore