



## Boaters' Rights Advocacy Coalition Veto HB481 Talking Points

### We need emails AND physical letters sent to Governor DeSantis asking him to veto the bill.

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Boaters' Rights Advocacy Coalition Members,

We know this has been a long session in the Florida legislature, and we have asked you to make many phone calls and write many emails and letters. While we have made an impact on the legislature's thinking there is one bill, House Bill 481, which has passed both the House and Senate and now awaits Governor DeSantis' signature or veto. **Our task now is to ask him for a veto.**

Under Florida law, once a bill is passed by both chambers of the legislature and is transmitted to the Governor's office, the Governor has 7 days to veto the bill (14 days if the legislature is out of session) or it automatically becomes law. Time is very important to this effort. Once again, and possibly for the last time this session, we need your support.

**We need emails and physical letters sent to Governor DeSantis asking him to veto the bill. Talking points that can be used are included below. Please do the following:**

1. Write an email to Governor DeSantis. Ask your spouse to write one. Ask your neighbor to write one. Ask all distant relatives to write an email. You can submit this email via [this link](#).
2. Please also [download](#), print, sign, and send a physical letter. Send that letter to our lobbyist and she will present the stack of letters to the Governor's office. Her address is:

Rosanna Catalano/ VETO  
Arrow Group  
215 S. Monroe Street, suite 601  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

If you don't have a printer, or can't afford the postage, please email the letter to [info@greatloop.org](mailto:info@greatloop.org) and we will print it and mail it for you. Please also ask your spouse, neighbor and any distant relatives to write a letter.

3. We also are getting vocal on social. Like, share, and post on our [FACEBOOK](#) and [INSTAGRAM](#) feeds. We are also collecting videos of boaters discussing their expenditures in Florida and their experiences there. These videos will be discussed separately.

*Talking points next page ----- >*



### Talking Points for HB481:

This bill restricts anchoring between additional islands in the Miami Beach area, extends the no-anchoring zone around marked mooring fields from 100 to 300 feet, and in counties with populations above 1.5 million people it prohibits anchoring for more than 4 hours during nighttime for more than 30 days in a six-month period. This bill part of the bill affects boaters in the following counties (cities in parentheses): Miami-Dade, Broward (Ft Lauderdale), Hillsborough (Tampa) and Palm Beach (West Palm Beach) counties.

**Recommendations:** The Boaters' Rights Advocacy Coalition recommends opposing this bill. The following talking points are provided:

- Existing state law allows counties to establish Anchoring Limitation Areas (ALA) which restrict anchoring to 45 days within established areas. With only a few exceptions the populous counties listed in this bill have made no attempt to establish ALAs within their county limits as allowed by existing state law, and where ALAs have been established under existing laws they are working. In Hollywood, Broward County established an ALA as provided under existing law and the North Lake and South Lake anchorages now contain no derelict boats. The existing statute is effective, and we recommend these counties establish ALAs as provided in existing laws before attempting to change the law.
- In Florida the seafloor is held in the public trust, and historically the state has not permitted municipalities to regulate length of stay in waters within their jurisdiction. We strongly recommend continuing that historical precedent.
- As of this date the FWC database shows no derelict boats in the Miami Beach area. We believe the problem in Florida is not well-found boats, but derelict boats that are often abandoned on our waterways. This bill attempts to punish responsible boat owners and does nothing to address derelict boats.
- Continued water quality monitoring by outside environmental groups in the areas impacted by this bill show no concerns with boaters discharging sewage in these areas.
- Seagrass in the Miami Beach area is not growing back, though biologists report this is because the bottom was damaged when this area was dredged. The islands in this area are formed from dredge spoils.
- Existing banned anchoring areas between the dredge spoil islands in Miami Beach are not harmful to cruising boat interests, but the additional banned areas in the present bill negatively impact anchoring there. The sponsors of this change attempt to push through bans on additional areas in Miami Beach each year.
- We recognize that many landowners throughout Miami Beach are distressed to see unsightly boats in front of their houses. We share their concern for derelict boats and boats at risk of becoming derelict. But these landowners do not own the waters and seafloor near their properties—those are held in the public trust, and available for the use of everyone. This bill is in direct opposition to the concept of lands held in the Public Trust.
- Industry groups estimate the impact to Florida's economy from boating is \$33.3B in 2023. This supports almost 100,000 jobs and over 7,000 businesses. Boating is big business in Florida and attempts to ban anchoring such as HB481 will have a significant negative effect on our lifestyle and boaters who visit here. If boaters can't anchor in Florida, they will be forced to go elsewhere and will take much of their investment in Florida's boating industry with them.