



VICTORY! FL LEGISLATURE AGREES TO SUPPORT THE STATE'S YACHT BROKERAGE INDUSTRY AND KEEP YACHT & SHIP BROKERS ACT!

After months of intense lobbying by FYBA and its partners, MIASF and MIAF, the Florida Legislature agreed Saturday not to repeal the *Florida Yacht & Ship Brokers Act (SS326)*. The Licensing and regulations that have successfully protected buyers, sellers and brokers since 1988 remain intact. Customer's escrow accounts will continue to be protected by licensed and bonded Florida Yacht and Ship Brokers.

"It was a tough fight," said Jeff Erdmann, Chairman of FYBA's Legislative Affairs program, and President of Fort Lauderdale-based Bollman Yachts. "There were moments when it looked like we might lose the battle, but we never gave up. Thanks to our lobbyist, Joe McCann, of Smith-Ballard, and the many calls and letters sent to state representatives by our members and brokers from across the state in support of our cause, we were able to convince members of Florida's House and Senate not to deregulate our industry."

Our Message Points Simply Made Sense

It took a while, but to their credit state lawmakers got it. They saw that repealing the *Florida Yacht & Ship Brokers Act* would harm Florida's vibrant yacht brokerage industry, costing the state tax revenue and jobs. In the end, the team's message points just made sense, and included the following:

- The *Florida Yacht & Ship Brokers Act* protects buyers, sellers and brokers by insuring that all Florida Yacht Brokers are licensed, bonded and adhere to the highest professional standards.
- The *Florida Yacht & Ship Brokers Act* has consistently run annual surpluses, costing the state and taxpayers nothing to operate while Yacht Brokers funnel millions of tax dollars each year to state coffers.
- Florida's Yacht Brokerage industry supports more 202,000 jobs and generates an estimated \$16.8 billion in total marine product sales throughout Florida's marine industry.
- Like realtors, Yacht Brokers also regularly work with other brokers across the state, nation and internationally, sharing commissions in the process. They also collect, hold and distribute large sums of money from clients, which are held in escrow accounts and are controlled by individual Yacht Brokerage offices.

A Special "Thanks" Goes to Our Friends and Supporters in the Legislature

The following members of the Florida Senate and House deserve additional recognition for helping us save The *Florida Yacht & Ship Brokers Act*. Please send them an e-mail expressing your appreciation for their current and future support.

Florida Senators: Hayes, Alexander, Negrón, Bogdanoff, Gaetz, Benquisto and Thrasher

House Representatives: Weatherford, Grimsley and Dorworth

Lobbying Program Pays Off Once Again

Last year, FYBA's lobbying program paid off by helping win passage of the \$18,000 sales/use tax on boat sales. Since it became law on July 1, 2010, the law has contributed to a significant rebound in boat sales, tax revenue and jobs. This year's successful effort to save the *Florida Yacht & Ship Brokers Act* demonstrates once again the importance of maintaining an ongoing legislative affairs program, backed by the grassroots support of FYBA members and the state's boating industry. FYBA will continue to work with state legislators on issues of importance to Florida's yacht brokers.

J. Erdmann, FYBA • 954-494-4320 • jeff@bollmanyachts.com

J. Sprague, MIAF • 561-723-5418 • johnsmia@sprint.blackberry.net / K. Hebert, MIASF • 954-605-2138 kristina.hebert@wardsmarine.com