

NMMA Meets with USTR to Advocate for the Recreational Boating Industry

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NMMA President and CEO Frank Hugelmeyer, along with SVP of Government Relations Robyn Boerstling, met with officials from the U.S. Trade Representative's (USTR) office last week to discuss the impact of tariffs on manufacturing jobs, local economies, and the position of strength the recreational boating industry enjoys in North America.

They highlighted the U.S. as the world's largest recreational boating market, with an economic impact of \$230 billion and a workforce of 812,000 in the U.S. Additionally, they reinforced the fact that 95% of boats sold in the U.S. are made domestically, underscoring the industry's reputation as a pillar of American manufacturing. The discussion was part of NMMA's ongoing efforts to advocate on behalf of the industry and mitigate the impacts of recent unfortunate retaliatory actions that have been announced.

"It was an honor and duty to represent NMMA members last Friday at the Office of the United States Trade Representative," **said Frank Hugelmeyer, President and CEO of NMMA.** "Joined by Robyn Boerstling, NMMA's Senior Vice President of Government

Relations and outside trade counsel Nate Bolin from K&L Gates, we discussed the trade landscape facing recreational marine manufacturers in the United States - focusing on jobs, manufacturing, small business, and the strong North American boating market that is the largest in the world.

“Our member-company businesses are unique and represent the best of manufacturing in the United States: 95% of all boats sold in the U.S. are made in the U.S. NMMA is seeking a fair-trade environment where marine manufacturers can equitably compete and grow markets both here and abroad.

“However, in these uncertain times, the protection of American boat builders, component-makers, and engine manufacturers is needed due to the risk of losing market access. A tariff-free remedy needs to be the ultimate outcome for all sides. As the Administration works toward fair, reciprocal trade relationships, NMMA is seeking strong steps to prevent the looming Canadian and EU retaliatory tariffs from causing long-term harm.”

During the meeting, Hugelmeyer and Boerstling discussed solutions that could safeguard manufacturing in the U.S., the North American supply chain, and underscored the certainty needed to ensure that our industry grows, innovates, and delivers American-made products to consumers at home and abroad.

They addressed the harmful effects of previous retaliatory tariffs in 2018 and cited real-life stories about the current impacts and market shifts manufacturers in the U.S. are facing. They stressed the need for a targeted and nuanced approach to trade policies to ensure boat builders, component-makers, and engine manufacturers can operate in a trading environment that allows them to fairly compete.

For more information on NMMA’s trade advocacy efforts or to discuss the impact of tariffs on your business, please contact Clay Crabtree, NMMA Senior Director of Public Policy, at ccrabtree@nmma.org.

NMMA remains committed to advocating for policies that protect the recreational boating industry and ensure its continued growth and success.