

Testimony Post Labor Day School Start

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Good afternoon Madam Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is Nicki Polan. I am the Executive Director for the Michigan Boating Industries Association (MBIA), and I thank you for the opportunity to testify today **in support of Post Labor Day School Start.**

I am here on behalf of our 350 members, 1500 marine business, and their 60,000 employees throughout Michigan – and I respectfully ask you to protect PLDS, and to close the loophole which allows schools to ignore this important law.

Although I represent the boating industry, I know that other recreational industries such as golf, fishing, camping, hiking, biking, theme parks, and overall tourism **also rely on PLDS to extend our already too short summer.**

We have heard directly from many of our members, that they have noticeable declines in boating activity and revenue once schools start in their areas.

And, we know that throughout Michigan we can find entire communities which rely on tourism and recreation, and these last few weeks of summer to generate revenue before the end of the season.

Some businesses make more than 50% of their annual revenue in the months of July and August. To lose even one week would be impactful to these businesses, and likely lead to jobs lost, and negative impacts to the state's economy.

The boating industry alone has a \$7.4 billion economic impact on the state's economy each year – combined with other industries and tourism, the damage could be significant.

Additionally, studies show PLDS it is what the people of this state want:

- When it first passed in 2005, 60% of voters supported it. In 2015 public support rose to 70%. That's overwhelming voter and parental support of Michigan's PLDS law!
- A landslide response of voters showed 75% want parents and local voters to decide when the school year begins – not school boards controlling this decision.
- A 2016 poll found that July and August were the preferred months for family vacations

by 64% of voters, with only 16% preferring to vacation in the cooler month of June.

- In Northern Michigan, the summer season doesn't even begin until the end of June – why not go later in June rather than starting earlier in one of the two most preferred vacation months for Michigan families.
- And finally, as reported by the Michigan Lodging & Tourism Association, there is little research to support Educator claims that a Balanced Calendar will advance learning.

So, therefore, on behalf of Michigan's boating industry, I urge you to protect PLDS because shortening our already too short summer will severely hurt businesses, jeopardize jobs, negatively impact tourism and the state's economy, and steal valuable vacation time from hard-working families.

Thank you for your time and consideration and the opportunity to speak today.