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# City of Toledo



*Carleton S. Finkbeiner*  
*Mayor*

September 7, 2006

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DATA PROCESSOR  
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Docket Management Facility (USCG-2006-<sup>25767-105</sup>~~2567~~)  
U. S. Department of Transportation  
Room PL-401  
400 SW Avenue  
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Dear Sirs:

The United States Coast Guard has announced their intentions to establish a number of "live-fire" zones in the Great Lakes. These areas would be used for training exercises utilizing live ammunition. I am opposed to the Great Lakes being used for target practice and request that the United States Coast Guard reconsider their request.

The Great Lakes is the largest body of fresh water in the world and provides for significant recreational activities. On Lake Erie, tourism is a 7.45 billion dollar a year enterprise composed primarily of boating, fishing and shoreline activities. Forty-seven percent of all the users of Lake Erie participate in boating activities. There are 5,241 dock spaces available in Lucas County alone. The formation of live-fire zones is in direct conflict with boating and fishing activities. In Lake Erie, the zones are all in areas where Ohio fishermen can be found throughout the year. In the other lakes, these zones are found in the areas crisscrossed by pleasure, charter and fishing boats.

By setting up the free fire zones in recreational areas, they will be discouraging the use of the Great Lakes for both boating and fishing. In fact, during drills these areas will be closed to such activities.

Another major concern of these free fire zones is the issue of boater safety. The Coast Guard currently plans to issue alerts on recreational marine band radio and in the news media, as well as



posting notices at marinas. This, however, does reach many recreational boaters. The plan does not adequately provide for the safety of the boating public.

The Coast Guard will be using live ammunition, which is composed of lead bullets. These bullets also contain other heavy metals, which could end-up in the lakes. The environmental impact from lead and other toxic metals in the lake has not been fully analyzed. The Coast Guard has followed internal military guidance on environmental compliance, however, questions still remain.

In the final analysis, the establishment of live-fire zones in the Great Lakes is not good public policy. The benefits derived by such actions are far outweighed by the impacts to recreational activities such as, boating and fishing and the possible environmental consequences.

Yours from Toledo - an All-America City!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carleton S. Finkbeiner', written over a horizontal line.

Carleton S. Finkbeiner, Mayor

CSF:RCS:elg