

May 2025

To: The Committee on Housing and Economic Development

RE: LD 1296 – An Act to Amend the Law Governing Watercraft Franchisor Warranty Reimbursements

Senator Curry, Representative Gere and members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

My name is Garrett Pendexter, and I am here to represent Hamlin's Marine as the Warranty Advisor for our Waterville location. Hamlin's Marine offers marine sales and services in Waterville and Hampden Maine. Hamlin's Marine is in support of LD 1296.

Hamlin's Marine is a dealer of over 10 brands of boats, 4 brands of marine engines, and EZ Loader trailers. We are dedicated to our many brands, and we ensure our technicians are trained in product knowledge and repair solutions. Every year, technicians are sent to training and schooling put on by our manufacturer to become true experts on the products we sell. Hamlin's Marine shows commitment to our brands through the inventory of product lines and a full parts department with parts on hand for every brand we sell.

While we show commitment and loyalty to our brands, LD1296 would strengthen the commitment from the manufacturer to the dealer. Every brand operates with a different warranty process. Some brands are easier to work with and less time-consuming than others. Overall, the warranty process typically involves seeking approval, ordering parts, completing warranty labor, and submitting for reimbursement. As a warranty advisor I spend my full day working somewhere in the middle of this process I have explained. The most time-consuming step in my day is seeking labor approval and additional labor approval when the job takes longer than expected.

Many of our warranty repairs are reimbursed with a flat rate, and I would like to discuss and provide an example of how labor flat rates are not fitting for the marine industry. This past month we had a pontoon boat with a warranty issue of the bow gate not sitting flush and showing an even gap between the top and bottom of the gate. Our manufacturer suggested

replacing the starboard bow rail which the gate is mounted on. After removing and installing a new rail the original issue with the gate was still present. In total we ended up having 17 hours of labor to resolve the issue. Our labor consisted of removing and reinstalling furniture, adjusting spacer variations, replacing broken hardware, and remounting the bow gate hinge onto the new rail. Even though we had a total of 17 hours into this job, the manufacturer claims the flat rate for this job is 1 hour. After quite a few emails and phone calls with our brands rep and upper management, the manufacturer is willing to cover some additional labor, but it will be impossible to fully recoup our time into the job.

Flat rates simply do not accommodate dealers in the marine industry as the layout and engineering on each unit is very different based on the model. Flat rates also do not consider any difficulties that occur during warranty repair.

Thank you for your time and I truly appreciate your willingness to let me share insight from my daily operations!

Respectfully,

Garrett Pendexter

Warranty Advisor

Hamlin's
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