



National Association of Charterboat Operators

P.O. Box 2990 Orange Beach, AL 36561
Phone (251-981-5136) Fax (251-981-8191)
info@nacocharTERS.org www.nacocharTERS.org

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Steinhatchee Charterboat Assn
Virginia Charter Boat Assn.
Westport Charterboat Association

December 17, 2007

Mr. Pedro G. Hernandez
City Manager
City of Miami
3500 Pan American Drive
Miami, FL 33133-5595
by fax: 305-250-5410
By email: PGH@MIAMIGOV.COM

Dear Mr. Hernandez:

NACO is a national association of over 3,300 charter boat owners and operators across the United States; we are the premier voice for our industry. We have over 123 members in the Miami area and on their behalf wish to express concern over the current commercial vessel dockage fee that went into effect on October 1, 2007 at your two city marinas Dinner Key and Bayside.

We understand the desire for increased revenue from all municipalities but wish to express our concern that by continuing the 43% increase on commercial vessel dockage rates will dramatically affect the ability of those vessel owners to continue to make profits and could cause some to exit their current businesses. Clearly, if a large portion of those businesses cannot make a profit and leave your marinas, the City of Miami will lose much more revenue than they could possibly make by the increased dockage rates. If the businesses relocate or go out of business the resulting loss of tourist dollars and thus other tourist related spending will further reduce the tax income for the City.

The dockage rate increase for the recreational vessels was reduced from the original proposed increase of \$18 to \$15.30 while the commercial rate remained the same at \$21. This is clearly unfair and could be considered discriminatory. The current rate at the Dade County Marina at Crandon Marina/Key Biscayne is \$10.30.

As you are aware, tourism is a driving force in providing for the Florida economy. The saltwater recreational fishing industry in Florida provides over \$8 BILLION in economic impact. This does not include excursion or dive vessels so this figure is just a portion of the overall economic impact for the state produced by these commercial vessels. Current and proposed regulations regarding U.S. Coast Guard requirements, fishing regulations, homeland security requirements, increased fuel costs, increased maintenance expenses and a host of other costly and burdensome requirements are causing the small family vessel businesses to operate at bare minimum profits and it is becoming extremely difficult to provide the historic services for communities such as yours.

We respectfully request that you reconsider your increased rate and work with the local industry leaders in finding a better solution than a 43% increase in dockage fees. If we can be of any further assistance in this matter, please contact us. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Capt. Robert F. Zales, II

Capt. Robert F. Zales, II
President

cc: Capt. Nick Martens