

Little Hoover Commission Testimony on CADBW Ap. 25 ,  
'12

“Good Morning:

Chairman Hancock,.... Distinguished members of the L.H.  
Commission:

Thank you for the opportunity to bring our issues before  
you to day and thank you for the service you are  
providing to our state in making government more  
efficient & effective.

I represent one of many Aquatics programs throughout  
CA (Over 200 in number) who have partnered with Ca.  
Dept. of Boating & Waterways in mutual efforts to  
enhance boating safety, education & training for our  
citizens. The program I work with is Tahoe Community  
Sailing at Tahoe. We are a public/ private partnership  
between the Tahoe City Public Utility Dist. Rec. Dept.,  
Obexer's Marina, the Tahoe Yacht Club and our  
organization Tahoe Community Sailing Foundation.  
Over our 12 yrs. of operation we have provided boating  
safety education, environmental stewardship training,

and invasive species identification/prevention education. Boating accidents are the 2<sup>nd</sup>. most prevalent transportation accident in the U.S. & we rank 2<sup>nd</sup>. In the U.S. for these accidents, even though the number of boating accidents have been reduced under DBW's program efforts in safety education & training.

While none of us is opposed to the governor's plan to save money for the state through a re-organization of Govt. it appears to us that certain approaches of the current plan do not address this issue and in fact may not be in the best interests of our State & its citizens. While we applaud what the Gov. is trying to do, we do not believe that merging DBW into the CA State Parks Dept. is an effective step in cost savings or efficiency of govt. and are respectfully asking the Little Hoover Commission to recommend to Gov. Brown that he remove the DBW merger from his re-organization plan.

One of our major concerns is that the programs, goals, and initiatives that we have worked on diligently will be lost in the much larger Parks Dept. that does not have boating as their interest nor boating as their mandate. In such a case we see that the interests of the boating

community may not be effectively served. Merger into a much larger, more bureaucratic organization does not necessarily enhance efficiency, or save money. Ca. State Parks is already taking \$ 26 million from the DBW budget. With that in mind, it is easy to envision further erosion of DBW budget in the near future, ....another concern that we have with this merger. Without the resources and support the Aquatics programs receive from DBW through grants from DBW we would be placed in a position of severely diminished capability to carry out our mission of boating safety education & training.

It is important to note that, no state general funds are required to fund DBW. All funding comes from marine gas taxes, interest on loans to public & private organizations made for boating infrastructure development which are used to expand CA.'s boating facilities (such loans are paid back with interest)

CA is a state with huge ocean, lake & river resources that contribute to both beauty/enjoyment and to our economy. To not have a DBW dedicated to the protection & development of these resources appears to

be the wrong approach to economic development & will not promote efficacy of Govt.

The boating industry and its associated business contribute over \$ 16.5 Billion in gross revenue for the state's economy. Also, \$ 1.6 B is generated yearly in State & local taxes. In addition, there are over 2.6 M recreational boaters in CA making us the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest boating state in the US. There are also, 8,500 recreation boating related business in CA supporting 284,000 direct & indirect jobs in our state. These businesses & jobs are important to our economic recovery. We believe this not only warrants a state Dept. to deal with the issues associated with our industry, but that CA. deserves a dedicated DBW.

Proposals to eliminate or merge DBW have come up at least 3 times in past history, but when carefully reviewed & evaluated they have been rejected each time.

We believe that merger of DBW, a department that has established a reputation for excellence, efficiency & transparency, with this proposed transfer of duties to Parks that this will lead to a loss of staff effectiveness, and service to the public.

Also, we understand the Little Hoover Com. has been receiving quite a number of communications in opposition to the GRP.. including some from state legislators & city & county govts. So, it would appear that there are many concerns about this proposed merger. We would respectfully ask that you to carefully review the options and consider proposing to Gov. Brown that the merger of DBW with parks be taken out of the GRP.

In summary, we are concerned about:

- 1) the loss of a strong dept. to deal with the issues of the boating public and boating industry, including harbors & waterways infrastructure development
- 2) the potential of continued & likely increased loss of funds to Parks in addition to the \$ 26 M they have already absorbed from the DBW budget
- 3) the possibility of losing grant funding for boating safety education & training for Aquatic Centers and for Law enforcement.
- 4) without Department status boating will not have a strong position to push forward with economic

development and promotion of CA's exceptional ocean,  
lake & river resources

I thank you for your time. Are there any questions?"

Presented by Bryce Griffith, Director, Tahoe Community  
Sailing Foundation, Inc.