Correspondence
Bd. 8/11/26, Item 31

Lopez, Maria [COB]

From:	Admin <mail@newportmooringassociation.org>
Sent:	Friday, August 7, 2026 8:00 AM
To:	COB_Response
Subject:	August 11, 2026 Public Comment Item #31 - Dana Point Ground Lease
Attachments:	NMA Public Comment August 11, 2026 Item #31.pdf

Hello,

Please see the attached public comment for the August 11, 2026 meeting of the Orange County Board of Supervisors. Can you please confirm receipt of the attached letter, and its distribution to each of the Supervisors?

Thank you,

Anne Stenton
President, Newport Mooring Association

August 7, 2026

Orange County Board of Supervisors
400 W Civic Center Dr.
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: Slip Rates and the Proposed new 66-Year Leases for Dana Point Harbor

Dear Chair Chaffee and Members of the Board of Supervisors,

The Newport Mooring Association (NMA) writes in support of the Dana Point Boaters Association's (DPBA) request to include a reasonable slip rate policy as part of the new 66-year lease with Dana Point Harbor Partners (DPHP).

DPHP has demonstrated its intention to continue increasing slip rates annually for the foreseeable future. Following dramatic increases of 26% to 95% in 2021, boaters have faced additional annual increases of approximately 7.9% to 9% in 2024, 2025, and 2026. The cumulative effect of these increases is to make boating increasingly unaffordable for middle-income families and "boaters on a budget," reducing access to this public harbor on California state tidelands in favor of those with greater financial means.

This is inconsistent with the goals of California's Coastal Act, which seeks to preserve public access to coastal waters and recreational boating opportunities for everyone.

- **Section 30210** provides that **"recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people,"** consistent with public safety and resource protection.
- **Section 30213** states that **"Lower cost visitor and recreational facilities shall be protected, encouraged, and, where feasible, provided."**
- **Sections 30211 through 30214** likewise emphasize protecting public access and recreational opportunities along California's coast.

The financial projections presented in the June 23 Agenda Staff Report (Item S94Z) further underscore why reasonable rate protections are warranted. The report shows that the total harbor revitalization is projected to cost approximately **$705 million**, with the marina and dry stack improvements accounting for **$209 million**, or just **29.6%** of the total project cost. Yet the same report projects that the marina and dry stack operations will generate approximately **71.9% of the estimated $2.2 billion in revenue over the 66-year lease term.**

Given these projections, it is reasonable to ask whether recreational boaters are being expected to shoulder a disproportionate share of the financial burden for the overall redevelopment. A reasonable slip rate policy would help ensure that future rate increases remain fair while still allowing the project to be financially successful.

The decisions made today will shape public access to Dana Point Harbor for the next 66 years. Southern California has a rich maritime heritage, and for generations thousands of families have enjoyed affordable access to the coast through Dana Point Harbor. Including reasonable slip rate protections in the lease will help preserve that tradition and ensure that recreational boating remains accessible to families of all income levels—not just those who can afford continually escalating slip fees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Newport Mooring Association, Board of Directors