

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1310

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to pilotage services.

Brief Description: Strengthening the provisions of the pilotage act affecting marine safety and protection of the marine environment.

Sponsors: Representatives K. Schmidt, R. Fisher and Buck; by request of Board of Pilotage Commissioners.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/2/95, 2/6/95 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/22/95, 98-0.

Passed Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives K. Schmidt, Chairman; Benton, Vice Chairman; Mitchell, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; R. Fisher, Ranking Minority Member; Hatfield, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Blanton; Brown; Buck; Cairnes; Chandler; Chopp; Elliot; Hankins; Horn; Johnson; Koster; McMahan; Ogden; Patterson; Quall; Robertson; Romero; D. Schmidt; Scott and Tokuda.

Staff: Jennifer Joly (786-7305).

Background: Pilots are responsible for the navigation of U.S. and foreign flag vessels in Puget Sound and Grays Harbor.

The Board of Pilotage Commissioners' (BPC) primary functions relate to pilot licensing and regulation. The BPC is responsible for the administration of pilot qualifications and performance standards, training and education requirements; setting pilotage tariffs; and monitoring the pilot and shipping industry to ensure adherence to the Pilotage Act.

When not detrimental to the public interest, an interested party may petition the BPC to exempt certain small passenger vessels or yachts (i.e., vessels not more than 500

gross tons and not more than 200 feet in length) operating exclusively in the waters of the Puget Sound pilotage district and lower British Columbia from Pilotage Act requirements. Exemptions granted must be reviewed by the BPC at least annually.

Currently, the maximum civil penalty for violation of the Pilotage Act is \$5,000.

Summary of Bill: Applicants for exemption from the Pilotage Act shall pay a fee, payable to the pilotage account, for initial applications and renewals in an amount to be established by rule, but not to exceed \$1,500.

The maximum civil penalty for violations of the Pilotage Act is \$10,000 for each violation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 24, 1995.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: A fee for applicants applying for a BPC exemption is necessary to recoup costs associated with holding a formal hearing (e.g., court reporter, attorneys, etc.). Increasing the maximum civil penalty for violations is necessary to enable the BPC to investigate and pursue complaints.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Larry Vognild, Board of Pilotage Commissioners; Captain Michael Gavin, Board of Pilotage Commissioners; Jim Moe, Puget Sound Steamship Operators Association; and Dennis Marshall, Board of Pilotage Commissioners.