

***Transportation Committee***

***SB 6194***

***Brief Description:*** Authorizing port districts to provide pilots in Grays Harbor.

***Sponsors:*** By Senators Snyder, Hargrove and T. Sheldon.

***Brief Summary of Bill***

- *Authorizes the Port of Grays Harbor to begin providing pilotage service on or before June 30, 2001.*

***Hearing Date:*** 6/13/01

***Staff:*** Reema Griffith (786-7301).

***Background:***

*In 1977, the legislature enacted the Pilotage Act which set forth the policies of the state governing the pilotage of shipping vessels. Among other things, the intent of the Pilotage Act was to have experienced, licensed pilots aboard vessels entering certain waters of the state to prevent the loss of human life, property and vessels, and to protect the marine environment.*

*Current law establishes that the Pilotage Act shall apply to two pilotage districts in the state:*

*the Puget Sound Pilotage District; and the Grays Harbor Pilotage District which includes all waterways within both Grays Harbor and Willapa Harbor. The demand for pilots varies greatly between these two districts. The Puget Sound district has a steady flow of shipping traffic which is always in need of pilotage service. However, the Grays Harbor district has seen a significant drop in shipping traffic due to the decline in the timber industry. With this decline, Grays Harbor has seen the number of pilots in the area dwindle down to two pilots. Because pilots are paid a fee per ship they pilot into port, the two remaining pilots in Grays Harbor are considering leaving the area to seek work elsewhere, which would make Grays Harbor the only deep water port on the Pacific Coast without pilotage service.*

***Summary of Bill:***

***The Port of Grays Harbor is authorized to begin providing pilotage service on or before June 30, 2001.***

***To be employed by the port district to perform pilotage services, a pilot must be licensed by the Board of Pilotage Commissioners (BPC). Before establishing pilotage services in the Grays Harbor pilotage district, the port district must provide 60 days written notice to the chair of the BPC.***

***If the port district requires additional pilots, they may petition the BPC to qualify and license as a pilot, a person who has already passed the Grays Harbor pilotage district examination and is on the waiting list for the training program for the district.***

***Appropriation: None.***

***Fiscal Note: Requested on June 12, 2001.***

***Effective Date: This bill takes effect on June 30, 2001.***