

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHCR 4401

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Environment, Energy & Water, March 29, 2001

Brief Description: Creating a joint select committee on the disposal of derelict vessels.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Rockefeller, Woods, Hunt and Lantz).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Energy & Water: 3/20/01, 3/29/01 [DP, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & WATER

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Eide, Jacobsen and Patterson.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Hale, McDonald and Morton.

Staff: Jim Metropulos (786-7784)

Background: The number of derelict vessels that have been abandoned by their owners in the state has increased in recent years. These vessels are frequently disposed of by sinking them into deep water. Derelict vessels can obstruct navigation and might contain hazardous wastes that could potentially be released into the environment. The costs associated with the removal of derelict vessels can be quite high.

Summary of Bill: A joint select committee on the disposal of derelict vessels is created consisting of eight members. Four members are from the state Senate and are selected by the President of the Senate, with two members from each of the two major political parties. Four members are from the state House of Representatives selected by the Co-Speakers of the House, with two members from each of the two major political parties.

The joint select committee must review current responsibilities of vessel owners, the Department of Natural Resources, and federal agencies regarding derelict vessels. The joint select committee must develop recommendations regarding the disposal and funding for the disposal of these vessels, and for preventing the abandonment of such vessels by January 1, 2002. Staff support for the joint select committee is provided by Senate Committee Services and the House Office of Program Research.

The committee must consult with port districts, cities, counties, state and federal agencies, owners of private marinas, commercial fishers, sport fishers, recreational boaters, environmental organizations, and other groups interested in developing the recommendations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: There is a need to get all of the parties together to address the problem of abandoned and derelict vessels in the state's waterways. We need to prevent people from abandoning their boats.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Representative Rockefeller; prime sponsor, Loren Stern; Department of Natural Resources.