

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2075

As Passed House:

March 13, 2003

Title: An act relating to recreational boating.

Brief Description: Studying recreational boating safety.

Sponsors: By Representatives Romero, Cooper, Buck and Kenney.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Fisheries, Ecology & Parks: 3/4/03 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/13/03, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the State Parks and Recreation Commission and the Boating Safety Advisory Council to research and recommend ways to reduce boating accidents, fatalities, and near misses; including recognition of homeland security precautions for boaters.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES, ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Cooper, Chair; Berkey, Vice Chair; Sump, Ranking Minority Member; Hinkle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buck, Hatfield, O'Brien, Pearson and Upthegrove.

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

Background:

The State Parks and Recreation Commission coordinates a statewide program of boating safety education. The boating safety program provides assistance in training, equipment and materials to local groups in carrying out a network of boating safety education and law enforcement activities.

Summary of Bill:

The State Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) and the Boating Safety Advisory Council must research and recommend ways to reduce boating accidents, fatalities, and near misses. The research should also include recognition of the need for homeland security precautions for boaters. The Commission must investigate a variety of methods for achieving safer boating practices, identify costs and potential sources of funding, and report to the Legislature by January 1, 2004.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Many recreational boaters are not aware of recent rule changes regarding boating near United States naval vessels or Coast Guard escort vessels. Rules have recently changed due to homeland security concerns and boaters should be better informed about the new rules. The State Parks and Recreation Commission receives federal funds for boating safety, and these funds could be used to focus efforts on this boating safety study. Legislative recognition of the seriousness of boating safety issues in the state will help secure federal funds that may expire this fall.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Representative Romero, prime sponsor; and BJ Ursin, Recreational Boating Association of Washington.

(Neutral) Fred Romero and James Horan, State Parks and Recreation Commission.