

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5036

As Amended by House, April 7, 2011

Title: An act relating to the derelict vessel and invasive species removal fee.

Brief Description: Regarding the derelict vessel and invasive species removal fee.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Marine Waters (originally sponsored by Senators Regala, Swecker and Fraser; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Ecology).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Marine Waters: 1/19/11, 1/26/11 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 2/22/11, 36-10.

Passed House: 4/07/11, 92-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & MARINE WATERS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5036 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Ranker, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Hargrove, Stevens and Swecker.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: Vessel Registration. Generally, a person must annually register a vessel in order to own or operate that vessel in state waters. The registration fee is \$10.50 which is deposited in the State General Fund.

Additional Fee for Invasive Species Programs. In addition to the registration fee, a vessel owner must pay an additional fee for purposes of funding both derelict vessel removal and invasive species programs. The portion of the additional fee that funds invasive species programs is \$3.00 and is distributed as follows:

- \$1.50 for aquatic invasive species prevention work by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), which may be used for purposes including to inspect watercraft, educate law enforcement on enforcing aquatic invasive species laws, evaluate specific risks, and implement an early detection and rapid response plan;

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- \$1.00 for freshwater aquatic algae control work by the Department of Ecology, which may be distributed as grants for management of excessive freshwater algae and to provide technical assistance about freshwater algae control; and
- \$.50 for aquatic invasive species enforcement, which may be used by the DFW and Washington State Patrol to facilitate the inspection of watercraft for the presence of aquatic invasive species.

The authority to collect the \$3.00 portion of the additional fee that funds these invasive species programs expires on June 30, 2012.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Additional Fee for Invasive Species Programs. The \$3.00 portion of the additional fee on vessel registrations that funds specified invasive species programs is made permanent.

Department of Ecology's Freshwater Algae Control Program. The scope of the Department of Ecology's aquatic algae control account and program is broadened from addressing excessive freshwater algae to addressing both excessive freshwater and saltwater nuisance algae.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

[OFM requested ten-year cost projection pursuant to I-960.]

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: Aquatic invasive species pose large environmental and fiscal risks for Washington. The programs utilizing the funding have been very successful in conducting monitoring, public education, and vessel inspection activities. The goal is to stop invasive species from entering state waters, and avoid the massive expense to try to eradicate them. The risks from toxic algae in lakes are also serious, posing risks to fish, pets and people. This funding allows the Department of Ecology to help local governments identify algae problems and provide grants to address those problems.

OTHER: These programs are very important, but some funds should be available for sea lettuce and invasive algae in salt water.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Bill Tweit, Department of Fish and Wildlife; Don Seeberger, Department of Ecology; Gene Williams, Washington Lake Protection Assn.; Daniel Fallstrom, Port of Manchester; Johan Hellman, Washington Public Ports Assn.; Don Russell, citizen; Bruce Wishart, People for Puget Sound.

OTHER: Doug Levy, City of Federal Way.

House Amendment(s): Specifies that funds in the aquatic algae control account may be used to establish contingency funds for emergent aquatic algae issues.