
**Community & Economic Development
Committee**

HB 1707

Brief Description: Requiring the wearing of personal flotation devices on kayaks, canoes, and stand-up paddleboards.

Sponsors: Representative Ryu.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the wearing of personal flotation devices on kayaks, canoes, and stand-up paddleboards, with exceptions.

Hearing Date: 1/14/22

Staff: Emily Poole (786-7106).

Background:

A person may not operate a vessel on the waters of the state without a personal flotation device on board for each person on the vessel. A violation of these rules is an infraction punishable by a fine if the vessel is not carrying passengers for hire. If the vessel is carrying passengers for hire, a violation of these rules is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine and up to 90 days in jail.

A person may not operate a vessel under 19 feet in length on the waters of this state with a child 12 years old and under unless the child is wearing a personal flotation device while the vessel is underway.

The following circumstances are excepted:

- while a child is below deck or in the cabin of a boat with an enclosed cabin;
- while a child is on a United States Coast Guard inspected passenger-carrying vessel

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- operating on the navigable waters of the United States; or
- while on board a vessel at a time and place where no person would reasonably expect a danger of drowning to occur.

A violation of these rules regarding flotation devices on vessels under 19 feet in length is an infraction punishable by a fine.

Summary of Bill:

A person may not operate a kayak, canoe, or stand-up paddleboard on the waters of this state unless the person is wearing a personal flotation device while underway, except when the person is:

- operating or occupying a squirt boat;
- part of certain sanctioned competitions or an event organized by a federally recognized tribe;
- under the direct supervision of a coach or trainer;
- participating in yoga under specified conditions;
- on a stand-up paddleboard, wearing a connecting leash, and in compliance with federal flotation device requirements; or
- a member of a federally recognized tribe.

A violation of this requirement is an infraction punishable by fine.

If a person cited for a violation of this requirement provides proof of federally recognized tribal membership, the citation must be dismissed, and the court may assess court administrative costs of \$25 at the time of dismissal.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 5, 2022.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2022.