

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5357

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 2, 1995

Title: An act relating to pilotage services.

Brief Description: Strengthening the provisions of the pilotage act affecting marine safety and protection of the marine environment.

Sponsors: Senators Owen, Prince and Bauer; by request of Board of Pilotage Commissioners.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/2/95 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Owen, Chair; Heavey, Vice Chair; Fairley, Kohl, Morton, Oke, Prentice, Prince, Rasmussen, Schow, Sellar and Wood.

Staff: Jennifer Joly (786-7305)

Background: Pilots are responsible for the navigation of U.S. and foreign flag vessels in Puget Sound and Grays Harbor.

The Board of Pilotage Commissioner's (BPC) primary functions relate to pilot licensing and regulation. The BPC is responsible for the administration of pilot qualification and performance standards, training, and educational requirements; setting pilotage tariffs; and monitoring the pilot and shipping industry to ensure adherence to the Pilotage Act.

When not detrimental to the public interest, an interested party may petition the BPC to exempt certain small passenger vessels or yachts (i.e., vessels not more than 500 gross tons and not more than 200 feet in length) operating exclusively in the waters of the Puget Sound pilotage district and lower British Columbia from Pilotage Act requirements. Exemptions granted must be reviewed by the BPC at least annually.

Currently, the maximum civil penalty for violation of the Pilotage Act is \$5,000 for each violation.

Summary of Bill: Applicants for exemption from the pilotage act must pay a fee to the pilotage account for initial applications and renewals in an amount to be established by rule, but not to exceed \$1,500.

The maximum civil penalty for violations of the pilotage act is \$10,000 for each violation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested.

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

Testimony For: A fee for applicants applying for a BPC exemption is necessary to recoup costs associated with holding a formal hearing (e.g. court reporter, attorneys, etc.). Increasing the maximum civil penalty for violations is necessary to enable the BPC to investigate and pursue complaints.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Larry Vognild, Chair, Board of Pilotage Commissioners (BPC); Captain Mike McGavin, pilot representative, BPC; Dennis Marshall, foreign shipping representative, BPC; James Moe, Puget Sound Steamship Operators Association.