

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5103

As Reported By House Committee On:
Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to commercial fishery licenses.

Brief Description: Increasing the number of alternate operators allowed under certain commercial fishery licenses.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Senators Oke and Winsley).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 4/2/97, 4/4/97 [DPA].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Butler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander; Chandler; Hatfield; Pennington and Sheldon.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Anderson.

Staff: Rick Anderson (786-7114).

Background: Current law allows a person who holds a commercial fishery license, charter boat license, or delivery license to designate up to two alternate operators on a vessel.

An alternate operator is someone who controls fishing gear, operates a charter boat, or delivers fish or shellfish taken from offshore waters into a port within the state.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Fish and Wildlife Commission is authorized to increase the number of alternate operators on a vessel by rule. This provision applies to vessels in which the primary operator holds a commercial fishery license, a charter boat license, or a delivery license.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The striking amendment requires the commission to adopt rules prior to increasing the number of alternate operators. The striking amendment also deletes a provision that would allow the commission to make decision about alternate operators on a case-by-case basis.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Some vessels owners are having a hard time finding alternate operators. Allowing a primary operator to designate more than two alternate operators will make it easier to find help. The commission should develop criteria by rule as to when it is appropriate to designate more than two alternate operators.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Bob Oke, prime sponsor (pro); Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries (pro with minor amendment); and Brian Edie, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (neutral).