

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1905

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 14, 2017

Title: An act relating to the volume limitation for certain vessels exempt from the pilotage act.

Brief Description: Modifying limitations for certain vessels exempt from the pilotage act.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Orcutt and Clibborn).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/02/17, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 3/13/17, 3/14/17 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the volume threshold for certain vessels for which the Board of Pilotage may provide a pilotage waiver.
- Requires certain qualifications for crew for a passenger vessel to qualify for an exemption.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators King, Chair; Hobbs, Ranking Minority Member; Lias, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cleveland, Hawkins, O'Ban, Saldaña, Takko, Van De Wege, Walsh and Wilson.

Staff: Hayley Gamble (786-7452)

Background: Board of Pilotage. Vessels operating in the Puget Sound or Grays Harbor pilotage districts are subject to compulsory pilotage, which means they must hire a licensed pilot to assist with vessel navigation. The Board of Pilotage (Board) is a state board created in 1935 that trains and licenses marine pilots, sets pilotage rates and enforces pilotage laws. The Board may also consider providing exemptions to pilotage requirements for certain vessels.

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.

Statutory Exemptions to Pilotage. Generally, U.S. flagged vessels and certain Canadian vessels are exempt from pilotage requirements in Puget Sound or Grays Harbor pilotage districts.

Board Approved Exemptions to Pilotage. A U.S. flagged vessel heading to a foreign destination is not automatically exempt but may apply for a waiver. The Board may provide an exemption for small passenger vessels that are not more than 500 gross international tons, not more than 200 feet long, and operate exclusively in Puget Sound and lower British Columbia. They may also provide an exemption for yachts with a volume not more than 750 gross international tons and not more than 200 feet long. Any exemption application must include information about the vessel including its intended use and area of operation. An exemption applicant shall pay a fee of no more than \$1,500.

Summary of Bill: The tonnage limit for small passenger vessels that the Board may provide a waiver for is increased from 500 to 1300 gross international tons. Small passenger vessels that may be approved for a pilotage exemption must be manned by U.S. or Canadian licensed deck and engine officers.

The tonnage limit for yachts that the Board may provide a waiver for is increased from 750 to 1300 gross international tons.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a companion to the House bill; both bills passed unanimously. Clipper is very excited about being able to bring a larger vessel into the Puget Sound. This bill better aligns 200 ft vessels with current volume standards.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Lisa Thatcher, Clipper; Peter Schrappen, Northwest Marine Trade Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.