

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5262

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Synopsis as Enacted

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

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators King and Hobbs).

**Senate Committee on Transportation**  
**House Committee on Transportation**

**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.

Statutory Exemptions to Pilotage. Generally, United States 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 United States 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:** The tonnage limit for small passenger vessels that the Board of Pilotage may provide a waiver for is increased from 500 to 1300 gross international tons.

The tonnage limit for yachts that the Board of Pilotage may provide a waiver for is increased from 750 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.

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*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.*

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	48	1
House	97	0

**Effective:** July 23, 2017