

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2544

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES,
FEBRUARY 25, 1992

Brief Description: Prohibiting the operation of vessels loaded beyond their safe carrying capacity ratings.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Representatives Belcher and Beck)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Metcalf, Chairman; Oke, Vice Chairman; Barr, Conner, Owen, Snyder, and Sumner.

Staff: Ats Kiuchi (786-7708)

Hearing Dates: February 25, 1992

BACKGROUND:

Overpowering and/or overloading boats are blamed for 27 percent of the fatal recreational boating accidents in our state since 1984. These accidents resulted in 50 deaths.

United States Coast Guard regulations require manufacturers to install a capacity plate on the boat. The plates provide guidelines for total weight, total persons, and maximum horsepower capacities the boat is capable of handling safely.

There are no enforcement provisions in the regulations.

SUMMARY:

No person shall operate a vessel loaded or powered beyond its capacity as stated on the United States Coast Guard capacity label. In the absence of a capacity label, no person shall exceed the capacity of the boat as determined by rule by the State Parks and Recreation Commission.

A violation is a class II civil infraction with a penalty not to exceed \$125.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:

Weather and other normal operating conditions will be considered in the determination of whether a vessel is being operated beyond its passenger, weight or engine horsepower capacity limitations.

TESTIMONY FOR:

Enforcement of the vessel capacity requirements will promote boating safety and help reduce recreational boating accidents.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Sheriff Bill Weister, Grant County (pro); Dave Williams, Interclub (pro); Nina Carter, State Parks and Recreation Commission (pro)