

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6248

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES,
FEBRUARY 6, 1992

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

SPONSORS: Senator Owen

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Ats Kiuchi (786-7708)

Hearing Dates: February 6, 1992

BACKGROUND:

An estimated 27 percent of the fatal recreational boating accidents in this state are caused by occupant overloading, exceeding weight capacity and excessive power to safely operate the boat. Federal Coast Guard regulations require manufacturers to install an informational label or plate with the maximum occupancy, weight and horsepower for the boat.

SUMMARY:

The state Parks and Recreation Commission shall determine by rule the capacity of watercraft if the federal Coast Guard required capacity label or the carrying capacity information by the manufacturer is missing or absent.

Any person who operates or permits the operation of a vessel in violation of the carrying capacity requirements is subject to maximum civil penalty of \$125 for a class II civil infraction.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

The capacity label provisions are needed to enforce boating safety regulations. A civil infraction penalty is appropriate to ensure compliance as well as serving as a safety reminder.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

The federal law on capacity labeling is duplicated. The provisions may be difficult to enforce since the rating systems for marine motors and boat capacities sometimes vary by manufacturers.

TESTIFIED: Nina Carter, Jim French, State Parks and Recreation Commission (pro); Jack Swanberg, Hal Schlomann, John Woodring, Northwest Marine Trades Association (pro); Dave Williams, Interclub (pro); Russ Overholt, Pierce County Sheriff's Office (pro)