
SENATE BILL 6450

State of Washington 63rd Legislature 2014 Regular Session

By Senators Pedersen, Kohl-Welles, Pearson, Liias, Ericksen, and Kline

Read first time 01/27/14. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources & Parks.

1 AN ACT Relating to on-water dwellings; amending RCW 90.58.270; and
2 creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes that all
5 Washington residents benefit from the unique aesthetic, recreational,
6 and economic opportunities that are derived from the state's aquatic
7 resources, including its navigable waters and shoreline areas. The
8 legislature also recognizes that, as affirmed in chapter 212, Laws of
9 2011, existing floating homes are an important cultural amenity and an
10 element of the state's maritime history and economy. The 2011
11 legislation, which clarified the legal status of floating homes, was
12 intended to ensure the vitality and long-term survival of floating home
13 communities.

14 (2) The legislature finds that further clarification of the status
15 of floating on-water residences that meet specific requirements and
16 share important cultural, historical, and economic commonalities with
17 floating homes, is necessary.

18 (3) The legislature, therefore, intends to: Preserve the existence
19 and vitality of current, floating on-water residences; establish

1 greater clarity and regulatory uniformity for these residences; and
2 respect the well-established authority of local governments to
3 determine compliance with regulatory requirements applicable to their
4 jurisdiction.

5 **Sec. 2.** RCW 90.58.270 and 2011 c 212 s 2 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 (1) Nothing in this ((statute)) section shall constitute authority
8 for requiring or ordering the removal of any structures, improvements,
9 docks, fills, or developments placed in navigable waters prior to
10 December 4, 1969, and the consent and authorization of the state of
11 Washington to the impairment of public rights of navigation, and
12 corollary rights incidental thereto, caused by the retention and
13 maintenance of said structures, improvements, docks, fills or
14 developments are hereby granted: PROVIDED, That the consent herein
15 given shall not relate to any structures, improvements, docks, fills,
16 or developments placed on tidelands, shorelands, or beds underlying
17 said waters which are in trespass or in violation of state statutes.

18 (2) Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering or
19 abridging any private right of action, other than a private right which
20 is based upon the impairment of public rights consented to in
21 subsection (1) ((hereof)) of this section.

22 (3) Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering or
23 abridging the authority of the state or local governments to suppress
24 or abate nuisances or to abate pollution.

25 (4) Subsection (1) of this section shall apply to any case pending
26 in the courts of this state on June 1, 1971 relating to the removal of
27 structures, improvements, docks, fills, or developments based on the
28 impairment of public navigational rights.

29 (5)(a) A floating home permitted or legally established prior to
30 January 1, 2011, must be classified as a conforming preferred use.

31 (b) A floating on-water residence that is permitted or legally
32 established prior to July 1, 2014, must be classified as a conforming
33 preferred use.

34 (c) For the purposes of this subsection:

35 (i) "Conforming preferred use" means that applicable development
36 and shoreline master program regulations may only impose reasonable
37 conditions and mitigation that will not effectively preclude

1 maintenance, repair, replacement, and remodeling of ((existing))
2 floating homes ((and)), floating ((home)) on-water residences, and
3 associated moorages by rendering these actions impracticable.

4 (ii) "Floating home" means a single-family dwelling unit
5 constructed on a float, that is moored, anchored, or otherwise secured
6 in waters, and is not a vessel, even though it may be capable of being
7 towed.

8 (iii) "Floating on-water residence" means a vessel that is
9 registered under chapter 88.02 RCW and: (A) Is used as a residence on
10 the water and has detachable utilities; (B) whose owner or primary
11 occupant has held a lease or sublease to use space in a marina as their
12 primary residence since a date prior to July 1, 2014; and (C) is either
13 capable of propulsion and steering or is without a means of self-
14 propulsion and steering equipment or capability, but is capable of
15 being towed.

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