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HOUSE BILL 1700

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State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

**By** Representatives Paul, Griffey, Fitzgibbon, Ryu, Ramel, Leavitt, Wicks, Shewmake, Duerr, Bateman, Bronoske, Peterson, Rule, Simmons, and Tharinger; by request of Department of Natural Resources

Prefiled 12/23/21. Read first time 01/10/22. Referred to Committee on Appropriations.

1 AN ACT Relating to sustainable funding for the derelict vessel  
2 removal account using the vessel watercraft excise tax; amending RCW  
3 82.49.030; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the  
6 department of natural resources' derelict vessel removal program is  
7 seen as a national model for vessel removal, yet funding for the  
8 program is not sufficient to remove all sunken and abandoned vessels  
9 from state waters.

10 (2) The legislature finds that since 2002, the department's  
11 derelict vessel removal program has removed almost 1,000 vessels and  
12 eliminated environmental and habitat threats to some 10.6 cumulative  
13 miles of Washington's waters.

14 (3) The legislature further finds that the number of derelict  
15 vessels continues to increase due to insufficient funding to address  
16 the increased need as more vessels are added to the list each year,  
17 resulting in some vessels lingering for years. Currently, there are  
18 around 270 identified vessels of concern, or 7,500 linear feet of  
19 vessels. These derelict vessels have critical impacts on water  
20 quality, salmon, and southern resident killer whales.

1 (4) It is the intent of the legislature to provide reliable  
2 funding for the derelict vessel removal program to:

3 (a) Remove all currently known derelict vessels by 2031;

4 (b) Support enforcement programs to reduce overall vessel  
5 abandonment and ensure compliance with vessel registration and  
6 insurance requirements;

7 (c) Increase investments in proactive approaches like the  
8 derelict vessel turn-in program;

9 (d) Utilize the results of a pilot vessel recycling program to  
10 work toward a more ongoing, permanent vessel recycling program;

11 (e) Through the vessel turn-in program and collaborative  
12 partnerships, increase capacity to address abandoned and derelict  
13 vessels that pose a threat to the public but are not on state-owned  
14 aquatic lands; and

15 (f) Provide additional support to authorized public entities,  
16 particularly in more rural areas that lack on-water resources, so  
17 they are able to initiate more removals within their jurisdiction.

18 **Sec. 2.** RCW 82.49.030 and 2010 c 161 s 1045 are each amended to  
19 read as follows:

20 (1) The excise tax imposed under this chapter is due and payable  
21 to the department of licensing, county auditor or other agent, or  
22 subagent appointed by the director of the department of licensing at  
23 the time of registration of a vessel. The department of licensing  
24 shall not issue or renew a registration for a vessel until the tax is  
25 paid in full.

26 (2) ~~((The))~~ Twenty-five percent of the excise tax collected each  
27 fiscal year under this chapter must be deposited in the derelict  
28 vessel removal account created in RCW 79.100.100. The remaining  
29 excise tax collected under this chapter must be deposited in the  
30 general fund.

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