



Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536



BILL ANALYSIS

Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986
TDD: (517) 373-0543

Senate Bill 759 (as enrolled)

Sponsor: Senator Bruce Patterson

Senate Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

House Committee: Great Lakes and Tourism

PUBLIC ACT 95 of 2004

Date Completed: 8-25-04

RATIONALE

Michigan had more than 1 million registered boats in 2002, more than any other state in the nation, according to the National Marine Manufacturers Association. There is a concern among some residents that the small fuel spills that are commonplace among recreational vessels could pose a significant environmental threat to the State's lakes, rivers, and groundwater given the large number of boats in Michigan. Some people believe that improved boater education on proper marine fueling techniques and the problems that may be caused by improper refueling will reduce the amount of oil and gas spilled into Michigan's lakes and rivers during boat refueling.

CONTENT

The bill amended Part 801 (Marine Safety) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to include in its boating safety classes information on marine fuel spills.

The Act requires the DNR to operate a free boating safety program to train youthful boat operators, and issue a boating safety certificate to those who satisfactorily complete the program. Under the bill, the DNR must include in the program information on the following: proper marine fueling techniques, the problems that marine fuel spillage may cause to water bodies, and how and where to report a marine fuel spill.

The bill took effect on May 7, 2004.

MCL 324.80140

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

Fuel spilled into Michigan's lakes and rivers has the potential to kill wildlife, pollute drinking water intakes, destroy coastal habitats, and ruin the economy of the State's many beach communities. Proper fueling techniques and the potential impact of spilled fuel are already taught in the DNR's adult boating classes. Under the bill, these subjects also will be taught to the next generation of Michigan boaters.

Legislative Analyst: J.P. Finet

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Jessica Runnels

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.