

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 9

BY REPRESENTATIVE BISHOP

BOATS/SHIPS/VESSELS: Requests the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to examine the issues involved in a program to issue a safe boater decal

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to examine the possibility of
3 issuance of a "safe boater" decal to designate vessel operators who are certified as
4 compliant with the state and federal laws concerning safe boating.

5 WHEREAS, with fifteen thousand miles of tidal coastline, five thousand miles of
6 inland waterways, nearly three hundred fifty thousand boats registered in the state for
7 recreational use, and a nickname of the "Sportsman's Paradise", boats are everywhere in the
8 state of Louisiana and are used not only for fishing but for skiing, sailing, and other
9 recreational activities on our waterways; and

10 WHEREAS, there are numerous laws pertaining to safety equipment required to be
11 onboard any boat in use including requirements for personal flotation devices, mufflers,
12 lights, fire extinguishers; and additional laws delineating safe operation of watercraft
13 including requirements for safe operation, restrictions on where boats can be operated,
14 prohibitions on overloading boats, over powering boats, and riding on gunwales, and
15 requirements for boat identification numbers and display of those numbers; and

16 WHEREAS, the primary enforcement of these numerous laws is carried out largely
17 by the enforcement agents of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries through random
18 boating safety compliance stops of boats on the water, and stops that involve inspections of
19 the watercraft and verification of the presence of the required equipment and registration
20 materials; and

1 WHEREAS, although boating safety compliance stops are understandably necessary
2 to maintain the safety of the entire boating community, frequent stops of boaters who are
3 continually in compliance with the law diminish the enjoyment of the boating experience
4 and reduce the amount of time that the boater can be on the water enjoying himself; and

5 WHEREAS, an outwardly visible and easily seen indication that a boater has been
6 checked by agents of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and found to be in
7 compliance with the boating safety laws could minimize the number of random boating
8 safety compliance stops any one boater must endure and would allow wildlife and fisheries
9 agents to focus their attention on those boaters who do not have a positive safety compliance
10 record; and

11 WHEREAS, it is possible that the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries could
12 implement a program whereby boaters are certified by the department to be in compliance
13 with the statutory and regulatory safe boating requirements and to have no violations of
14 statute or regulation on their record for a designated period of time, with the certification
15 being verified by a decal that is to be placed on the outside of the boat hull near the
16 identification number, thus enabling the boater to enjoy his boating activity without intrusion
17 and allowing the wildlife agent to be available to enforce other actions where necessary; and

18 WHEREAS, prior to implementation of such a program, the department would need
19 to evaluate the efficacy and usefulness of such a program and what impact such a program
20 might have on the safety compliance and performance of the boating public in the state and
21 a report on those findings to the legislature would inform the legislature of the need for
22 legislation to enable a certified safe boater program.

23 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
24 urge and request the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to examine the possibility of
25 issuance of a "safe boater" decal to designate vessel operators who are certified as compliant
26 with the state and federal laws concerning safe boating and submit a report of findings no
27 later than March 1, 2018, to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment
28 and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the
30 secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 9 Original

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Bishop

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