

Senate Fiscal Agency  
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**SFA****BILL ANALYSIS**

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House Bill 4060 (as reported without amendment)  
Sponsor: Representative Mary Ann Middaugh  
House Committee: Conservation and Outdoor Recreation  
Senate Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

### **CONTENT**

The bill would amend Part 801 (Marine Safety) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to exempt a vessel operator who was towing a person preparing for a specific water ski tournament from a requirement of the Act; and require the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to establish standards for and to certify tournament water ski vessel operators and tournament water skiers.

The Act provides that a person must not operate a vessel on State waters if he or she is towing or otherwise assisting a person on water skis, unless someone capable of communicating to the vessel operator the condition and needs of the person being towed or assisted is on board the vessel and positioned to observe that person. The bill provides that this requirement would not apply if the vessel operator and the person being towed were certified under the bill; towing were conducted so that, on average, no more than one vessel approached within 300 feet of the towing vessel during any five-minute period; and the vessel were equipped with a center mounted tow pylon, a large clear rearview mirror capable of allowing the vessel operator to distinguish hand signals at 75 feet, and markings that identified the vessel as being operated in conformance with the bill.

The bill would require that the DNR adopt standards for water ski tournament boat operation established by the U.S.A. Water Ski in "Trained Boat Driver Program" (April, 1997), and by the American Water Ski Association in "Drivers' Policy Manual". The DNR could promulgate rules providing for alternative standards, however, and would have to certify and issue proof of certification to each tournament water ski vessel operator who satisfied the bill's standards. The bill also would require the DNR to adopt standards for tournament water skiers established by the Michigan Water Ski Association in "Guidelines for Training Permit Eligibility" (Proposed Revision 125 of 1996). The DNR could promulgate rules providing for alternative standards, and would have to certify each tournament water skier who satisfied the bill's standards and specify the bodies of water upon which they could practice.

The Michigan Water Ski Association would have to provide annually to the DNR and the Michigan Sheriffs Association a list of the individuals considered qualified for tournament water skiing and up to three bodies of water on which each could practice for tournament water skiing.

MCL 324.80152

Legislative Analyst: P. Affholter

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

Date Completed: 3-24-99

Fiscal Analyst: G. Cutler