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Senate Bills 535 and 536 (as introduced 6-3-03)
Sponsor: Senator Patricia L. Birkholz (Senate Bill 535)
Senator Jason Allen (Senate Bill 536)
Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

Date Completed: 6-10-03

CONTENT

The bills would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require the Secretary of State to make available for purchase Great Lakes Protection speciality watercraft decals, and require that the proceeds be used for public education on aquatic nuisance species.

The bills are tie-barred.

Senate Bill 536

The bill would require the Secretary of State to sell Great Lakes Protection speciality watercraft decals when a person applied for a certificate of number and decal, and at other times as determined by the Secretary of State. The decal would cost \$35 and be valid for three years (except as provided under Senate Bill 535). The Secretary of State would have to design the decal to depict some aspect of the Great Lakes or of Great Lakes water quality.

Currently, before a person operates a water vessel, he or she must pay the Secretary of State a fee based on the length and type of the vessel, and obtain a certificate of number and a decal. The decal is valid for three years, and must be display on the forward half of the vessel.

Senate Bill 535

The bill would require the Secretary of State to forward \$25 from each decal sold to the State Treasurer for deposit into the Michigan Great Lakes Protection Fund, and to retain \$10 as reimbursement for the cost of creating and distributing the decals. The money from the sale of the decals would have to be used for public education on the threat of aquatic nuisance species, and on efforts to eradicate them from the Great Lakes and other waters of the State. The Secretary of State could sell decals that were valid for less than three years, in which case the Secretary would have to prorate the portion of the cost of the decal that was to deposited into the Fund.

The Secretary of State could establish the appropriate placement of specialty watercraft decals on watercraft, so as not to create confusion for law enforcement officers with the registration decals currently required.

(The Act defines "aquatic nuisance species" as a nonindigenous species that threatens the diversity or abundance of native species or the ecological stability of infested waters, or commercial, agricultural, aquacultural, or recreational activities dependent on such waters.)

MCL 324.80155 et al. (S.B. 535)
Proposed MCL 324.80124a (S.B. 536)

Legislative Analyst: Claire Layman

FISCAL IMPACT

Senate Bill 535

The bill would have an indeterminate fiscal impact depending on the number of Great Lakes Protection specialty watercraft decals issued. There are approximately 915,000 registered watercraft in Michigan.

Senate Bill 536

The bill would result in costs to the Department of State related to the design and production of Great Lakes Protection specialty watercraft decals. No cost estimate is available from the Department of State. The extent to which the Department of State's costs would be offset by revenue would depend on the number of stickers sold.

Fiscal Analyst: Bill Bowerman