

Legislative Analysis



AIRBOAT REGULATION

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Senate Bill 1234

Sponsor: Sen. Patricia L. Birkholz

House Committee: Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Natural Resources

Senate Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

Complete to 5-6-08

A SUMMARY OF SENATE BILL 1234 AS PASSED THE SENATE 4-24-08

The bill would amend Part 801 (Marine Safety) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to prohibit a person from operating an airboat within 450 feet of a residence between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. at a speed exceeding that required to maintain forward movement.

The prohibition would not apply to the operation of an airboat under any of the following circumstances: in an emergency when necessary to protect public safety; in the event an airboat has run aground and needs to be freed; or for a governmental purpose, if the airboat is clearly marked and identified as being used for a governmental purpose.

Airboats (also known as a fan boats or swamp boats) are flat-bottomed boats designed for use in shallow water, propelled by a rear-mounted caged airplane propeller and an airplane or automotive engine. They are capable of relatively high speeds in swamps and shallow waters. Airboats are used in search and rescue operations; by tour operators; and by trappers, anglers, and other recreational users.

(The bill would restore restrictions previously contained in Part 801 that expired by operation of a sunset provision on May 1, 2007. The bill appears to be substantially similar to Senate Bill 336, also sponsored by Senator Birkholz, which passed the Senate on March 15, 2007).

MCL 3324.80108a

FISCAL IMPACT:

There would be no fiscal impact on the state or local governmental units.

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