

Senate File 548 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 548
BY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL
RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 108)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the use of personal flotation devices on
2 personal watercraft.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. Section 462A.9, subsection 6, Code 2025, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 6. a. Every vessel shall carry at least one life preserver,
4 life belt, ring buoy or other device, of the sort prescribed by
5 the rules of the commission, for each passenger, so placed as to
6 be readily accessible. This does not apply to a vessel ~~which~~
7 that is a racing shell used in the sport of sculling or to a
8 sailboard while used for windsurfing.

9 b. A person shall not operate a personal watercraft on the
10 waters of this state under the jurisdiction of the commission
11 unless every person on board the personal watercraft is wearing a
12 type I, II, III, or V personal flotation device that is approved
13 by the United States coast guard, which may include a device
14 known as a "float coat" that meets this standard, while the
15 personal watercraft is under way. A personal flotation device
16 described in this paragraph is not required to be worn by a
17 passenger of a personal watercraft if the person satisfies all
18 of the following:

19 (1) The person is at least eighteen years of age.

20 (2) The personal watercraft is moving at ten miles per hour
21 or less or is traveling in a no-wake zone.

22 EXPLANATION

23 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
24 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

25 This bill relates to the use of personal flotation devices on
26 personal watercraft. The bill requires all persons on board a
27 personal watercraft to wear a personal flotation device. The
28 bill provides an exception to the personal flotation device
29 requirement when the person is at least 18 years of age and the
30 personal watercraft is traveling at 10 miles per hour or less
31 or is in a no-wake zone. Under current administrative rules,
32 all operators and passengers of personal watercraft must wear
33 a specified personal flotation device. A "personal watercraft"
34 means a vessel, less than 16 feet in length, which is propelled
35 by a water jet pump or similar machinery as its primary source

1 of motor propulsion and is designed to be operated by a person
2 sitting, standing, or kneeling on the vessel, rather than being
3 operated by a person sitting, standing, or kneeling inside the
4 vessel. A person in violation of the personal flotation device
5 requirement is guilty of a simple misdemeanor punishable by a
6 scheduled fine of \$30.

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