



Oregon

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State Marine Board

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February 7, 2019

House Committee on Natural Resources

Chair Representative Brad Witt
Vice-Chair Representative Chris Gorsek
Vice-Chair Representative Sherrie Sprenger
Representative Greg Barreto
Representative Caddy McKeown
Representative Jeff Reardon
Representative David Brock Smith

Dear Chair Witt, Vice-Chair Gorsek, Vice-Chair Sprenger and Members:

Response to HB 2078 Commercial Fishing Education Requirements and the meaning behind the word "competency" in ORS 830.

During testimony on HB 2078, questions arose to commercial fishermen and charter captains' boating educational requirements. The Oregon State Marine Board does not license or regulate commercial fishing boating activities.

Our understanding is the Coast Guard requires individuals to complete a rigorous educational prerequisite to obtain a Coast Guard Captains License in order to carry passengers for hire. A Coast Guard Captains License meets the educational requirement to obtain an Oregon Boater Education card.

To our knowledge, there is no comparable educational requirement for commercial fishermen as they do not carry passengers for hire. However, the agency agrees commercial fishermen often have significant amount of operational boating experience and during their career may also have obtained a Coast Guard Captains License.

The primary objective for the Oregon Boater Education program is to have knowledgeable and safe boaters. In light of that, we would propose the following amendment that addresses both the educational component for commercial fisherman and issues related to the meaning of the word competency.

- In Section 1 (1) change the word "competency" in the first sentence to "knowledge". Throughout the rest of the bill it could be simply referred to as the "minimum standard" instead of "minimum competency standard". It could also be referenced as "minimum knowledge standard" if Legislative Counsel determined that preferential.
- Remove Section 2 (2) "and is engaged in commercial fishing". This would maintain current law that exempts someone holding a commercial fishing license.

These changes will focus HB2078 on its primary objective of removing the 60-day exemption for new boaters; making clear the test is "knowledge based" not a competency based test; and improve safety boating safety in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Larry Warren
Director

