HLS 17RS-574 ENGROSSED

2017 Regular Session

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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 9

BY REPRESENTATIVE BISHOP AND SENATOR CORTEZ

BOATS/SHIPS/VESSELS: Requests the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to examine the issues involved in a program to issue a safe boater decal

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

## 2 To urge and request the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to examine the possibility of 3 issuance of a "safe boater" decal to designate vessels that are certified as compliant 4 with the state and federal laws concerning safe boating. 5 WHEREAS, with fifteen thousand miles of tidal coastline, five thousand miles of 6 inland waterways, nearly three hundred fifty thousand boats registered in the state for 7 recreational use, and a nickname of the "Sportsman's Paradise", boats are everywhere in the 8 state of Louisiana and are used not only for fishing but for skiing, sailing, and other 9 recreational activities on our waterways; and 10 WHEREAS, there are numerous laws pertaining to safety equipment required to be 11 onboard any boat in use including requirements for personal flotation devices, mufflers, 12 lights, fire extinguishers; and additional laws delineating safe operation of watercraft 13 including requirements for safe operation, restrictions on where boats can be operated, 14 prohibitions on overloading boats, over powering boats, and riding on gunwales, and 15 requirements for boat identification numbers and display of those numbers; and 16 WHEREAS, the primary enforcement of these numerous laws is carried out largely 17 by the enforcement agents of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries through random 18 boating safety compliance stops of boats on the water, and stops that involve inspections of 19 the watercraft and verification of the presence of the required equipment and registration 20 materials; and

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WHEREAS, although boating safety compliance stops are understandably necessary to maintain the safety of the entire boating community, frequent stops of vessels that are continually in compliance with the law diminish the enjoyment of the boating experience and reduce the amount of time that the boater can be on the water enjoying himself; and WHEREAS, an outwardly visible and easily seen indication that a vessel has been checked by agents of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and found to be in compliance with the boating safety laws could minimize the number of random boating safety compliance stops any one boater must endure and would allow wildlife and fisheries agents to focus their attention on those boaters who do not have a positive safety compliance record; and WHEREAS, it is possible that the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries could implement a program whereby vessels are certified by the department to be in compliance with the statutory and regulatory safe boating requirements and to have no violations of statute or regulation on their record for a designated period of time, with the certification being verified by a decal that is to be placed on the outside of the boat hull near the identification number, thus enabling the boater to enjoy his boating activity without intrusion and allowing the wildlife agent to be available to enforce other actions where necessary; and WHEREAS, prior to implementation of such a program, the department would need to evaluate the efficacy and usefulness of such a program and what impact such a program might have on the safety compliance and performance of the boating public in the state and a report on those findings to the legislature would inform the legislature of the need for legislation to enable a certified safe boater program. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to examine the possibility of issuance of a "safe boater" decal to designate vessels that are certified as compliant with the state and federal laws concerning safe boating and submit a report of findings no later than March 1, 2018, to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

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HCR NO. 9

## **DIGEST**

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 9 Engrossed

2017 Regular Session

Bishop

Requests the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to examine the possibility of issuance of a "safe boater" decal to designate vessels that are certified as compliant with the state and federal laws concerning safe boating and submit a report of findings no later than March 1, 2018, to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources.

## Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by <u>House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment</u> to the <u>original</u> resolution:

1. Change the certification <u>from</u> vessel operators <u>to</u> vessel.