

2026 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 243

BY SENATOR KLEINPETER

BOATS/BOATING. Provides for requirements to stop and board a vessel. (8/1/26)

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AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 34:851.29, relative to vessel stops and boardings; to provide for vessel operation and equipment; to provide for safety of persons and property; to provide for law enforcement; to provide for compliance; to provide for authority to stop and board vessels; to provide for probable cause; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 34:851.29 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§851.29. Enforcement

It shall be the duty and responsibility of every wildlife agent and peace officer of this state and its subdivisions to enforce the provisions of this Part, ~~and in the exercise thereof, they are hereby.~~ **However, no officer is** authorized to **perform a vessel stop and or** board any vessel for the purpose of ~~addressing inquiries to those on board, requiring appropriate proof of identification therefrom, examining the certificate of numbers issued under this Part or in the absence of such certificate requiring appropriate proof of identification of the owner or operator of the vessel,~~ **enforcing the** ~~and in addition, examining such vessel for compliance with~~

1 **provisions of** this Part, **unless the officer has probable cause to believe that a**
 2 **violation of this Part has occurred or is occurring.** Officers so boarding any vessel
 3 shall first identify themselves and such officer in the performance of his duties shall
 4 be without liability for trespass.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, 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)]

	DIGEST	
SB 243 Original	2026 Regular Session	Kleinpeter

Present law authorizes wildlife agents and peace officers, with or without a warrant, to stop and board any vessel to address inquiries, require identification of persons and vessels, and examine vessels for compliance with operation and equipment safety laws. Further requires officers to first identify themselves and exempts officers from liability for trespass.

Proposed law retains the duty of wildlife agents and peace officers to enforce the provisions of present law but prohibits an officer from stopping or boarding a vessel for the purpose of enforcing present law unless the officer has probable cause to believe that a violation has occurred or is occurring.

Proposed law retains the requirement that an officer identify himself prior to boarding and retains the exemption from liability for trespass while performing official duties.

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Amends R.S. 34:851.29)