

Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation

CS/HB 703 — Vessels

by Highway and Waterway Safety Subcommittee; and Rep. Workman and others (CS/CS/SB 1454 by Fiscal Policy Committee; Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee; and Senator Hutson)

The bill revises what constitutes careless operation of a vessel to only apply if a person is operating a vessel in an unreasonable or imprudent manner that endangers the life, limb, or property of another person outside of the vessel or endangers the life, limb, or property of another person due to vessel overloading or excessive speed.

The bill requires the issuance of safety inspection decals by law enforcement officers to operators of vessels that have been found in compliance with the safety equipment carriage and use requirements. The bill prohibits law enforcement officers from stopping a vessel solely for the purpose of inspecting the safety equipment carriage and use requirements, if the vessel has a properly displayed valid safety inspection decal, unless there is reasonable suspicion that a violation of the safety equipment carriage and use requirements is occurring or has occurred.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2016.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 104-13