

By Senator Bennett

21-579-04

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A bill to be entitled  
An act relating to the protection of manatees;  
amending s. 370.12, F.S.; creating an exception  
from penalties for activities that are  
otherwise prohibited if the activity is  
reasonably necessary in order to prevent the  
loss of life or property or render necessary  
assistance to persons or property; providing an  
effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Paragraph (s) of subsection (2) of section  
370.12, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

370.12 Marine animals; regulation.--

(2) PROTECTION OF MANATEES OR SEA COWS.--

(s) Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph,  
any person violating the provisions of this subsection or any  
rule or ordinance adopted pursuant to this subsection shall be  
guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable as provided in s.  
370.021(1)(a) or (b).

1. Any person operating a vessel in excess of a posted  
speed limit shall be guilty of a civil infraction, punishable  
as provided in s. 327.73, except as provided in subparagraph  
2.

2. This paragraph does not apply to persons violating  
restrictions governing "No Entry" zones or "Motorboat  
Prohibited" zones, who, if convicted, shall be guilty of a  
misdemeanor, punishable as provided in s. 370.021(1)(a) or  
(b), or, if such violation demonstrates blatant or willful

1 action, may be found guilty of harassment as described in  
2 paragraph (d).

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4 A person may engage in any activity otherwise prohibited by  
5 this subsection if the activity is reasonably necessary in  
6 order to prevent the loss of life or property due to weather  
7 conditions or other reasonably unforeseen circumstances, or in  
8 order to render necessary assistance to persons or property.

9 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
10 law.

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SENATE SUMMARY

14 Provides an exception from penalties for activities  
15 otherwise prohibited if the activity is reasonably  
16 necessary to prevent the loss of life or property or  
17 render necessary assistance to persons or property.

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