



Oregon

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DATE: March 11, 2021

TO: Senate Committee on Energy & Environment

FROM: Abby Boudouris, Legislative Analyst

SUBJECT: SB 740 of 2021 Session

Each year the Marine Board successfully removes Abandoned and Derelict Vessels (ADV's) from waterways throughout Oregon. SB 740 increases fees collected from sailboats over 12 feet in length and all motorboats, and increases the amount that the Oregon State Marine Board may deposit into the Salvaged Vessel Subaccount each biennium. Funds in the Salvaged Vessel Subaccount assist local and state agencies with managing ADV removal, which improves public safety and protects the environment.

When a vessel sinks, it poses a threat to the environment. Oil spills are immediately toxic to marine organisms, and many vessels have other pollutants onboard, which can also negatively impact water quality. In the past DEQ has documented household hazardous waste, sewage, batteries, illicit drug labs, gas cylinders, drums of hazardous waste, lead, copper, mercury, and asbestos onboard derelict vessels. Additionally, ADV's can pose a hazard to navigation, endanger public safety and represent a public nuisance.

Each year DEQ receives reports of dozens of potentially abandoned or derelict vessels through the Oregon Emergency Response System. If oil or hazardous materials are present, DEQ works with partner agencies such as the US Coast Guard or US EPA in order to remove oil and hazardous waste from vessels. The funds DEQ uses to remove pollutants is restricted to oil or hazardous materials, and is therefore not authorized to spend funds to remove the vessels themselves. Once hazards are removed, DEQ then notifies the Marine Board and Department of State Lands that a derelict vessel has been identified and put it on the list of vessels to be removed. Funding limitations have prevented the removal of all identified vessels. The increase of boat registration fees and the Salvaged Vessel Subaccount will allow the State to remove more abandoned and derelict vessels from Oregon's waterways.

DEQ has no position on this bill.

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